

COMMON SENSE;

ADDRESSED TO THE

INHABITANTS

OF

A M E R I C A,

On the following interesting

S U B J E C T S.

I. Of the Origin and Design of Government in general, with concise Remarks on the English Constitution.

II. Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession.

III. Thoughts on the present State of American Affairs.

IV. Of the present Ability of America, with some miscellaneous Reflections.

A NEW EDITION, with several Additions in the Body of the Work. To which is added an APPENDIX, together with an Address to the People called QUAKERS.

N. B. The New Addition here given increases the Work upwards of One-Third.

*Man knows no Master save creating Heaven,
Or those whom Choice and Common Good ordain.*

THOMSON.

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M D C C L X X V I.

I N T R O D U T I O N.

PERHAPS the sentiments contained in the following pages are not yet sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favour; a long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right, and raises at first a formidable out cry in defence of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason.

As a long and violent abuse of power, is generally the means of calling the right of it in question, (and in matters too which might never have been thought of, had not the sufferers been aggravated into the enquiry) and as the King of England hath undertaken in his own right, to support the parliament in what he calls theirs, and as the good people of this country are grievously oppressed by the combination they have an undoubted privilege to enquire into the pretensions of both, and equally to reject the usurpation of either.

In the following sheets the author hath studiously avoided every thing which is personal among ourselves. Compliments as well as censure to individuals make no part thereof. The wise and the worthy need not the triumph of a pamphlet; and those whose sentiments are injudicious, or unfriendly, will cease of themselves, unless too much pains are bestowed upon their conversion.

The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances hath, and will arise, which are not local, but universal, and through which the principles of all lovers of mankind are affected, and in the event of which their affections are interested. The laying a country desolate with fire and sword, declaring war against the natural rights of all mankind, and extirpating the defenders thereof from the face of the earth, is the concern of every man to whom nature hath given the power of feeling; of which class, regardless of party censure, is the **AUTHOR.**

P. S. The publication of this new edition hath been delayed, with a view of taking notice (had it been necessary) of any attempt to refute the doctrine of independance: As no answer hath yet appeared, it is now presumed that none will, the time needful for getting such a performance ready for the public being considerably past.

Who the author of this production is, is wholly unnecessary to the public, as the object for attention is the Doctrine itself, not the Man. Yet it may not be unnecessary to say that he is unconnected with any party, and under no sort of influence public or private, but the influence of reason and principle.

Philadelphia, February 14, 1776.

COMMON

COMMON SENSE.

Of the origin and design of government in general, with concise remarks on the English constitution.

SOME writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government, by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively* by uniting our affections, the latter *negatively* by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher.

Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one; for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries *by a government*, which we might expect in a country *without government*, our calamity is heightened by reflecting, that we furnish the means by which we suffer. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform, and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case, advises him out of two evils to chuse the least. *Wherefore*, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows, that whatever *form* thereof appears most likely to insure it to us, with the least expence and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.

In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons settled in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest, they will then represent the first peopling of any county, or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto; the strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude; that he is soon obliged to seek assistance and relief of another, who in his turn requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness; but *one* man might labour out the common period of life without accomplishing any thing; when he had felled his timber he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger in the mean time would urge him from his work, and every different want call him a different way; Disease, nay even misfortune would be death, for tho' neither might be mortal, yet either would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.

Thus, necessity like a gravitating power, would soon form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessings of which, would supercede, and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary while they remained perfectly just to each other; but as nothing but heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen, that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other; and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue.

Some convenient tree will afford them a state-house, under the branches of which, the whole colony may assemble to deliberate on public matters. It is more than probable that their first laws will have the title only of REGULATIONS, and be enforced by no other penalty than public disesteem. In this first parliament every man, by natural right, will have a seat.

But as the colony increases, the public concerns will increase likewise, and the distance at which the members may be separated, will render it too inconvenient for all of them

to meet on every occasion as at first, when their number was small, their habitations near, and the public concerns few and trifling. This will point out the convenience of their consenting to leave the legislative part to be managed by a select number chosen from the whole body, who are supposed to have the same concerns at stake, which those have, who appointed them, and who will act in the same manner as the whole body would act, were they present. If the colony continue increasing, it will become necessary to augment the number of the representatives, and that the interest of every part of the colony may be attended to, it will be found best to divide the whole into convenient parts, each part sending its proper number; and that the *elected* might never form to themselves an interest separate from the *electors*, prudence will point out the necessity of having elections often; because as the *elected* might by that means return and mix again with the general body of the *electors* in a few months, their fidelity to the public will be secured by the prudent reflection of not making a rod for themselves. And as this frequent interchange will establish a common interest with every party of the community, they will mutually and naturally support each other, and on this (not on the unmeaning name of king) depends the *strength of government, and the happiness of the governed*.

Here then is the origin and rise of government; namely, a mode rendered necessary by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world; here too is the design and end of government, viz. freedom and security. And however our eyes may be dazzled with show, or our ears deceived by sound, however prejudice may warp our wills, or interest darken our understanding; the simple voice of nature and of reason will say, it is right,

I draw my idea of the form of government from a principle in nature, which no art can overturn, viz. that the more simple any thing is, the less liable it is to be disordered, and the easier repaired when disordered; and with this maxim in view, I offer a few remarks on the so much boasted constitution of England. That it was noble for the dark and slavish times in which it was erected, is granted. When the world was over-run with tyranny, the least remove therefrom was a glorious risque. But that it is imperfect, subject to convulsions,

sions, and incapable of producing what it seems to promise, is easily demonstrated.

Absolute governments (tho' the disgrace of human nature) have this advantage with them, that they are simple; if the people suffer, they know the head from which their suffering springs, know likewise the remedy, and are not bewildered by a variety of causes and cures. But the constitution of England is so exceedingly complex, that the nation may suffer for years together without being able to discover in which part the fault lies; some will say in one and some in another, and every political physician will advise a different medicine.

I know it is difficult to get over local or long standing prejudices, yet if we will suffer ourselves to examine the component parts of the English constitution, we shall find them to be the base remains of two ancient tyrannies, compounded with some new republican materials.

First—The remains of monarchial tyranny in the person of the king.

Secondly.—The remains of aristocratical tyranny in the persons of the peers.

Thirdly.—The new republican materials in the persons of the commons, on whose virtue depends the freedom of England.

The two first, by being hereditary, are independent of the people; wherefore in a *constitutional sense* they contribute nothing towards the freedom of the state.

To say that the constitution of England is a *union* of three powers reciprocally *checking* each other, is farcical, either the words have no meaning, or they are flat contradictions.

To say that the commons is a check upon the king, presupposes two things:

First.—That the king is not to be trusted without being looked after, or in other words, that a thirst for absolute power is the natural disease of monarchy.

Secondly.—That the commons, by being appointed for that purpose, are either wiser or more worthy of confidence than the crown.

But as the same constitution, which gave the commons a power to check the king by withholding the supplies, gives afterwards the king a power to check the commons by em-

empowering

powering him to reject their other bills ; it again supposes that the king is wiser than those whom it has already supposed to be wiser than him. A mere absurdity !

There is something exceedingly ridiculous in the composition of monarchy ; it first excludes a man from the means of information, yet empowers him to act in cases where the highest judgement is required. The state of a king shuts him from the world, yet the business of a king requires him to know it thoroughly ; wherefore the different parts, by unnaturally opposing and destroying each other, prove the whole character to be absurd and useless.

Some writers have explained the English constitution thus : The king, say they, is one, the people another ; the peers are an house in behalf of the king, the commons in behalf of the people ; but this hath all the distinctions of an house divided against itself ; and though the expressions be pleasantly arranged, yet when examined, they appear idle and ambiguous ; and it will always happen, that the nicest construction that words are capable of, when applied to the description of something which either cannot exist, or is too incomprehensible to be within the compass of description, will be words of sound only ; and though they may amuse the ear, they cannot inform the mind, for this explanation includes a previous question, viz. *How came the king by a power which the people are afraid to trust, and always obliged to check ?* Such a power could not be the gift of a wise people, neither can any power, *which needs checking*, be from God ; yet the provision, which the constitution makes, supposes such a power to exist.

But the provision is unequal to the task ; the means either cannot or will not accomplish the end, and the whole affair is a *felo de se* ; for as the greater weight will always carry up the less, and as all the wheels of a machine are put in motion by one, it only remains to know which power in the constitution has the most weight, for that will govern ; and tho' the others, or a part of them, may clog, or, as the phrase is, check the rapidity of its motion, yet so long as they cannot stop it, their endeavours will be ineffectual ; the first moving power will at last have its way, and what it wants in speed is supplied by time.

That the crown is this overbearing part in the English constitution, needs not be mentioned, and that it derives its whole

whole consequence merely from being the giver of places and pensions, is self-evident, wherefore, though we have been wise enough to shut and lock a door against absolute monarchy, we at the same time have been foolish enough to put the crown in possession of the key.

The prejudice of Englishmen in favour of their own government by kings, lords and commons, arises as much or more from national pride than reason. Individuals are undoubtedly safer in England than in some other countries, but the *will* of the king is as much the *law* of the land in Britain as in France, with this difference, that instead of proceeding directly from his mouth, it is handed to the people under the more formidable shape of an act of parliament. For the fate of Charles the first hath only made kings more subtle—not more just.

Wherefore, laying aside all national pride and prejudice in favour of modes and forms, the plain truth is, that *it is wholly owing to the constitution of the people, and not to the constitution of the government*, that the crown is not as oppressive in England as in Turkey.

An inquiry into the *constitutional errors* in the English form of government is at this time highly necessary; for as we are never in a proper condition of doing justice to others, while we continue under the influence of some leading partiality, so neither are we capable of doing it to ourselves while we remain fettered by any obstinate prejudice. And as a man, who is attached to a prostitute, is unfit to chuse or judge of a wife, so any prepossession in favour of a rotten constitution of government will disable us from discerning a good one.

Of monarchy and hereditary succession.

MANKIND being originally equals in the order of creation, the equality could only be destroyed by some subsequent circumstances; the distinctions of rich, and poor, may in a great measure be accounted for, and that without having recourse to the harsh, ill-sounding names of oppression and avarice. Oppression is often the *consequence*, but seldom or never the *means* of riches; and though avarice will preserve

preserve a man from being necessitously poor, it generally makes him too timorous to be wealthy.

But there is another and greater distinction, for which no truly natural or religious reason can be assigned, and that is, the distinction of men into **KINGS** and **SUBJECTS**. Male and female are the distinctions of nature, good and bad the distinction of heaven; but how a race of men came into the world so exalted above the rest, and distinguished like some new species, is worth enquiring into, and whether they are the means of happiness or of misery to mankind.

In the early ages of the world, according to the scripture chronology, there were no kings; the consequence of which was, there were no wars; it is the pride of kings which throw mankind into confusion. Holland without a king hath enjoyed more peace for this last century than any of the monarchical governments in Europe. Antiquity favours the same remark; for the quiet and rural lives of the first patriarchs hath a happy something in them, which vanishes away when we come to the history of Jewish royalty.

Government by kings was first introduced into the world by the heathens, from whom the children of Israel copied the custom. It was the most prosperous invention the devil ever set on foot for the promotion of idolatry. The Heathens paid divine honours to their deceased kings, and the christian world hath improved on the plan, by doing the same to their living ones. How impious is the title of sacred majesty applied to a worm, who in the midst of his splendor is crumbling into dust.

As the exalting one man, so greatly above the rest cannot be justified on the equal rights of nature, so neither can it be defended on the authority of scripture; for the will of the almighty, as declared by Gideon and the prophet Samuel, expressly disapproves of government by kings. All anti-monarchical parts of scripture have been very smoothly glossed over in monarchical governments, but they undoubtedly merit the attention of countries which have their governments yet to form. "*Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's*" is the scripture doctrine of courts, yet it is no support of monarchical government, for the Jews at that time were without a king, and in a state of vassalage to the Romans.

Near three thousand years passed away from the Mosaic account of the creation, till the Jews under a national delusion
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requested a king. Till then their form of government (except in extraordinary cases, where the almighty interposed) was a kind of republic administered by a judge and the elders of the tribes. Kings they had none, and it was held sinful to acknowledge any being under that title but the Lord of Hosts. And when a man seriously reflects on the idolatrous homage which is paid to the persons of kings, he need not wonder that the almighty, ever jealous of his honour should disapprove of a form of government which so impiously invades the prerogative of heaven.

Monarchy is ranked in scripture as one of the sins of the Jews, for which a curse in reserve is denounced against them. The history of that transaction is worth attending to.

The children of Israel being oppressed by the Midianites. Gideon marched against them with a small army, and victory, through the divine interposition, decided in his favour. The Jews, elate with success, and attributing it to the generalship of Gideon, proposed making him a king, saying, *Rule thou over us, thou and thy son and thy son's son.* Here was temptation in its fullest extent; not a kingdom only, but an hereditary one; but Gideon in the piety of his soul replied, *I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you, THE LORD SHALL RULE OVER YOU.* Words need not be more explicit; Gideon doth not decline the honor, but denieth their right to give it; neither doth he compliment them with invented declarations of thanks, but in the positive stile of a prophet charges them with disaffection to their proper sovereign, the king of Heaven.

About one hundred and thirty years after this, they fell again into the same error. The hankering which the Jews had for the idolatrous customs of the Heathens, is something exceedingly unaccountable; but so it was, that laying hold of the misconduct of Samuel's too sons, who were entrusted with some secular concerns, they came in an abrupt and clamorous manner to Samuel, saying, *Behold thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways, now make us a king to judge us, like all the other nations.* And here we cannot but observe that their motives were bad, viz. that they might be like unto other nations, i. e. the Heathens, whereas their true glory laid in being as much unlike them as possible. *But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, Give us a king to judge us; and Samuel prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord said unto Samuel, hearken*

harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, THAT I SHOULD NOT REIGN OVER THEM. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even unto this day; wherewith they have forsaken me and served other Gods; so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice, howbeit, protest solemnly unto them and shew them the maner of the king that shall reign over them, i. e. not of any particular king, but the general manner of the kings of the earth, whom Israel was so eagerly copying after. And notwithstanding the great distance of time and difference of manners, the character is still in fashion. And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people, that asked of him a king. And he said, this shall be the manner of the king that shall reign over you; he will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen, and some shall run before his chariots, (this description agrees with the present mode of oppressing men) and he will appoint him captain over thousands and captains over fifties, and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots; and he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be boakers, (this describes the expence and luxury as well as the oppression of kings) and he will take your fields and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants; and he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give them to his officers and to his servants, (by which we see that bribery, corruption and favouriteism are the standing vices of kings) and he will take the tenth of your men servants, and your maid servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work; and he will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants, and ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen, AND THE LORD WILL NOT HEAR YOU IN THAT DAY." This accounts for the continuation of monarchy; neither do the characters of the few good kings which have lived since, either sanctify the title, or blot out the sinfulness of the origin; the high encomium given of David takes no notice of him officially as a king, but only as a man after God's own heart. Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel, and they say, nay, but we will have a king over us, that we may be

be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles. Samuel continued to reason with them, but to no purpose; he set before them their ingratitude, but all would not avail; and seeing them fully bent on their folly, he cried out *I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain* (which then was a punishment, being in the time of wheat harvest) *that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great which ye have done in the sight of the Lord,* IN ASKING YOU A KING. So Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day. And all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God that we die not, for WE HAVE ADDED UNTO OUR SINS THIS EVIL, TO ASK A KING. These portions of scripture are direct and positive. They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty hath here entered his protest against monarchical government, is true, or the scripture is false. And a man hath good reason to believe that there is as much of king-craft, as priest-craft, in withholding the scripture from the public in Popish countries. For monarchy in every instance is the popery of government.

To the evil of monarchy we have added that of Hereditary succession; and as the first is a degradation and lessening of ourselves, so the second, claimed as a matter of right, is an insult and an imposition on posterity. For all men being originally equals, no one by birth could have a right to set up his own family in perpetual preference to all others for ever, and though himself might deserve some decent degree of honours of his cotemporaries, yet his descendants might be far too unworthy to inherit them. One of the strongest natural proofs of the folly of hereditary right in kings, is, that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule by giving mankind an *ass for a Lion*.

Secondly, as no man at first could possess any other public honours than were bestowed upon him, so the giver of those honours could have no right to give away the right of posterity. And though they might say, "We choose you for our head," they could not, without manifest injustice to their children, say, "that your children, and your children's children shall reign over ours for ever. Because such an un-

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wife, unjust, unnatural compact might (perhaps) in the next succession put them under the government of a rogue or a fool. Most wise men, in their private sentiments, have ever treated hereditary right with contempt; yet it is one of those evils, which, when once established, is not easily removed; many submit from fear, others from superstition, and the more powerful part shares with the king the plunder of the rest.

This is supposing the present race of kings in the world to have had an honourable origin; whereas, it is more than probable, that could we take off the dark covering of antiquity, and trace them to their first rise, that we should find the first of them nothing better than the principal ruffian of some restless gang, whose savage manners, or pre-eminence in subtlety, obtained him the title of chief among plunderers; and who, by increasing in power, and extending his depredations, over-awed the quiet and defenceless to purchase their safety by frequent contributions. Yet his electors could have no idea of giving hereditary right to his descendants, because such a perpetual exclusion of themselves was incompatible with the free and unrestrained principles they professed to live by. Wherefore, hereditary succession, in the early ages of monarchy, could not take place as a matter of claim, but as something casual or complimentary; but as try or no records were extant in those days, and tradition of history stuffed with fables, it was very easy, after the lapse of a few generations, to trump up some superstitious tale, conveniently timed, Mahomet like, to cram hereditary right down the throats of the vulgar. Perhaps the disorders which threatened, or seemed to threaten, on the decease of a leader and the choice of a new one, (for elections among ruffians could not be very orderly) induced many at first to favour hereditary pretensions; by which means it happened, as it hath happened since, that what at first was submitted to as a convenience, was afterwards claimed as a right.

England, since the conquest, hath known some few good monarchs, but groaned beneath a much larger number of bad ones; yet no man in his senses can say that their claim under William the Conqueror is a very honourable one. A French bastard, landing with an armed banditti, and establishing himself king of England against the consent of the natives, is in plain terms a very paltry, rascally original. It certainly
hath

hath no divinity in it. However, it is needless to spend much time in exposing the folly of hereditary right; if there are any so weak as to believe it, let them promiscuously worship the ass and the lion, and welcome. I shall neither copy their humility, nor disturb their devotion.

Yet I should be glad to ask how they suppose kings came at first? The question admits but of three answers, viz.—either by lot, by election, or by usurpation. If the first king was taken by lot, it establishes a precedent for the next, which excludes hereditary succession. Saul was by lot, yet the succession was not hereditary, neither does it appear from that transaction there was any intention it ever should. If the first king of any country was by election, that likewise establishes a precedent for the next; for to say that the *right* of all future generations is taken away, by the act of the first electors, in their choice not only of a king, but of a family of kings for ever, hath no parallel in or out of scripture, but the doctrine of original sin, which supposes the free will of all men lost in Adam; and from such comparison, and it will admit of no other, hereditary succession can derive no glory. For as in Adam all sinned, and as in the first electors all men obeyed; as in the one all mankind were subjected to Satan, and in the other to sovereignty; as our innocence was lost in the first, and our authority in the last; and as both disable us from re-assuming some former state and privilege, it unanswerably follows, that original sin and hereditary succession are parallels. Dishonourable rank! Inglorious connexion! Yet the most subtle sophist cannot produce a juster simile.

As to usurpation, no man will be so hardy as to defend it; and that William the Conqueror was an usurper, is a fact not to be contradicted. The plain truth is, that the antiquity of English monarchy will not bear looking into.

But it is not so much the absurdity as the evil of hereditary succession which concerns mankind. Did it ensure a race of good and wise men, it would have the seal of divine authority, but as it opens a door to the *foolish*, the *wicked*, and the *improper*, it hath in it the nature of oppression. Men, who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent; selected from the rest of mankind, their minds are early poisoned by importance; and the world they

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act in differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but little opportunity of knowing its true interests, and when they succeed to the government, are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions.

Another evil which attends hereditary succession is, that the throne is subject to be possessed by a minor at any age; all which time the regency, acting under the cover of a king, have every opportunity and inducement to betray their trust. The same national misfortunes happens when a king worn out with age and infirmity, enters the last stage of human weakness. In both these cases, the public becomes a prey to every miscreant, who can tamper successfully with the follies either of age or infancy.

The most plausible plea which hath ever been offered in favour of hereditary succession, is, that it preserves a nation from civil wars; and were this true, it would be weighty; whereas, it is the most barefaced falsity ever imposed upon mankind. The whole history of England disowns the fact. Thirty kings and two minors have reigned in that distracted kingdom since the conquest, in which time there have been (including the revolution) no less than eight civil wars and nineteen rebellions. Wherefore instead of making for peace, it makes against it, and destroys the very foundation it seems to stand on.

The contest for monarchy and succession, between the houses of York and Lancaster, laid England in a scene of blood for many years. Twelve pitched battles, besides skirmishes and sieges were fought between Henry and Edward. Twice was Henry prisoner to Edward, who in his turn was prisoner to Henry. And so uncertain is the fate of war, and the temper of a nation, when nothing but personal matters are the ground of a quarrel, that Henry was taken in triumph from a prison to a palace, and Edward obliged to fly from a palace to a foreign land; yet as sudden transition of temper are seldom lasting; Henry in his turn was driven from the throne, and Edward recalled to succeed him. The parliament always following the strongest side.

This contest began in the reign of Henry the Sixth, and was not entirely extinguished till Henry the Seventh, in whom the families were united. Including a period of 67 years, viz. from 1422 to 1489.

In short monarchy and succession have laid (not this or that kingdom only) but the whole world in blood and ashes. 'Tis a form of government which the word of God bears testimony against, and blood will attend it.

If we enquire into the business of a king, we shall find that in some countries they have none; and after fauntering away their lives without pleasure to themselves or advantage to the nation, withdraw from the scene, and leave their successors to tread the same idle ground. In absolute monarchies the whole weight of business, civil and military, lies on the king; the children of Israel in their request for a king, urged this plea, "that he may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles." But in countries where he is neither a judge nor a general, a man would be puzzled to know what is his business.

The nearer any government approaches to a republic, the less business there is for a king. It is somewhat difficult to find a proper name for the government of England. Sir William Meredith calls it a republic; but in its present state it is unworthy of the name, because the corrupt influence of the crown by having all the places in its disposal, hath so effectually swallowed up the power, and eaten out the virtue of the house of commons (the republican part in the constitution) that the government of England is nearly as monarchical as that of France or Spain. Men fall out with names without understanding them. For it is the republican and not the monarchical part of the constitution of England which Englishmen glory in, viz. the liberty of choosing an house of commons from out of their own body—and it is easy to see that when republican virtue fails, slavery ensues. Why is the constitution of England sickly, but because monarchy hath poisoned the republic, the crown hath engrossed the commons?

In hath little more to do than to make war and give away places; which in plain terms, is to impoverish the nation, and set it together by the ears. A pretty business indeed for a man to be allowed eight hundred thousand sterling a year for, and worshipped into the bargain! Of more worth is one honest man to society, and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived.

Thoughts

Thoughts on the present state of American affairs.

IN the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense; and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his reason and his feelings to determine for themselves; that he will put *on*, or rather that he will not put *off* the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.

Volumes have been written on the subject of the struggle between England and America. Men of all ranks have embarked in the controversy, from different motives, and with various designs: but all have been ineffectual, and the period of debate is closed. Arms, as the last resource, decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the king, and the continent have accepted the challenge.

It hath been reported of the late Mr Pelham (who tho' an able minister, was not without his faults) that on his being attacked in the house of commons, on the score, that his measures were only of a temporary kind, replied "*they will last my time.*" Should a thought so fatal and unmanly possess the colonies in the present contest, the name of ancestors will be remembered by future generations with detestation.

The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a city, a county, a province, or a kingdom, but of a continent—of at least one eighth part of the habitable globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected, even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seed-time of continental union, faith, and honor. The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; the wound will enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.

By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new æra for politics is struck; a new method of thinking hath arisen. All plans, proposals, &c. prior to the nineteenth of April, *i. e.* to the commencement of hostilities, are like the almanacks of the last year; which, though proper then, are

superfeded and uselefs now. Whatever was advanced by the advocates on either fide of the question then, terminated in one and the fame point, viz. a union with Great Britain; the only difference between the parties was the method of effecting it; the one propofing force, the other friendship; but it hath fo far happened that the firft hath failed, and the fecond hath withdrawn her influence.

As much hath been faid of the advantages of reconciliation, which, like an agreeable dream, hath paffed away and left us as it were, it is but right, that we fhould examine the contrary fide of the argument, and inquire into fome of the many material injuries which thefe colonies fustain, and always will fustain, by being connected with, and dependant on Great Britain. To examine that connection and dependance, on the principles of nature and common fenfe, to fee what we have to truft to, if feparated, and what we are to expect, if dependant.

I have heard it afferted by fome, that as America hath flourifhed under her former connection with Great Britain, that the fame connection is neceffary towards her future happinefs, and will always have the fame effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well affert, that becaufe a child has thrived upon milk, that it is never to have meat, or that the firft twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true, for I anfwer roundly, that America would have flourifhed as much, and probably much more, had no European power had any thing to do with her. The commerce, by which fhe hath enriched herfelf, are the neceffaries of life, and will always have a market while eating is the cuftom of Europe.

But fhe has protected us, fay fome. That fhe has engroffed us is true, and defended the continent at our expence as well as her own, is admitted, and fhe would have defended Turkey from the fame motive, viz. the fake of trade and dominion.

Alas, we have been long led away by ancient prejudices, and made large facrifices to fuperftition. We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without confidering that her motive was *interest*, not *attachment*; that fhe did not protect us from *our enemies on our account*, but from *her enemies on her own account*, from thofe who had no quarrel with us on
any

any *other account*, and who will always be our enemies on the *same account*. Let Briton waver her pretensions to the continent, or the continent throw off the dependance, and we should be at peace with France and Spain were they at war with Britain. The miseries of Hanover last war ought to warn us against connections.

It has lately been asserted in parliament, that the colonies have no relation to each other, but through the parent country i. e. that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and so on for the rest, are sister colonies by the way of England; this is certainly a very round-about way of proving relationship, but it is the nearest and only true way of proving enemyship, if I may so call it. France and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be our enemies as *Americans*, but as our being the *subjects of Great Britain*.

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families; wherefore, the assertion, if true, turns to her reproach; but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase *parent or mother country* hath been jesuitically adopted by the

and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds. Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from *every part* of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

In this extensive quarter of the globe, we forget the narrow limits of three hundred and sixty miles (the extent of England) and carry our friendship on a larger scale; we claim brotherhood with every European christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment.

It is pleasant to observe by what regular gradations we surmount the force of local prejudice, as we enlarge our acquaintance with the world. A man born in any town in England divided into parishes, will naturally associate most with his fellow-parishoners (because their interests in many cases will be common) and distinguish him by the name of *neighbour*; if he meets him but a few miles from home, he drops the narrow idea of a street, and salutes him by the

name of *townsman*; if he travels out of the county, and meet him in any other, he forgets the minor divisions of street and town, and calls him *countryman*, i. e. *countyman*; but if in their foreign excursions they should associate in France, or any other part of *Europe*, their local remembrance would be enlarged into that of *Englishmen*. And by a just parity of reasoning, all Europeans meeting in America, or any other quarter of the globe, are *countrymen*; for England, Holland, Germany, or Sweden, when compared with the whole, stand in the same places on the larger scale, which the divisions of street, town, and county do on the smaller ones; distinctions too limited for continental minds. Not one-third of the inhabitants, even of this province, are of English descent. Wherefore I reprobate the phrase of parent or mother country applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow, and ungenerous.

But admitting, that we were all of English descent, what does it amount to? Nothing. Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name and title: And to say that reconciliation is our duty, is truly farcical. The first king of England, of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the peers of England are descendants from the same country; wherefore, by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France.

Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and her colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world. But this is mere presumption; the fate of war is uncertain, neither do the expressions mean any thing; for this continent would never suffer itself to be drained of inhabitants to support the British arms in either Asia, Africa, or Europe.

Besides what have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because it is the interest of all Europe to have America a *free port*. Here trade will always be a protection, and her barrenness of gold and silver secure her from invaders.

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation, to shew a single advantage that ~~this~~ continent can reap, by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge

challenge, not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for, buy them where we will.

But the injuries and disadvantages we sustain by that connection, are without number; and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instruct us to renounce the alliance: Because, any submission to, or dependance on Great Britain, tends directly to involve this continent in European wars and quarrels; and set us at variance with nations, who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint. As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do, while by her dependance on Britain, she is made the make-weight in the scale of British politics.

Europe is too thickly planted with kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin, *because of her connection with Britain*. The next war may not turn out like the last, and should it not, the advocates for reconciliation now, will be wishing for separation then, because, neutrality in the case, would be a safer convoy than a man of war. Every thing that is right or natural pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART. Even the distance at which the almighty hath placed England and America, is a strong and natural proof, that the authority of the one over the other, was never the design of Heaven. The time likewise at which the continent was discovered, adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled encreases the force of it. The reformation has preceded by the discovery of America, as if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety.

The authority of Great Britain over this continent, is a form of government, which sooner or later must have an end: and a serious mind can draw no true pleasure by looking forward, under the painful and positive conviction, that what he calls "the present constitution" is merely temporary.

rary. As parents, we can have no joy, knowing that *this government* is not sufficiently lasting to ensure any thing which we may bequeath to posterity; and by a plain method of argument, as we are running the next generation into debt, we ought to do the work of it, otherwise we use them meanly and pitifully. In order to discover the line of our duty rightly, we should take our children in our hands, and fix our station a few years farther into life; that eminence will present a prospect, which a few present fears and prejudices conceal from our sight.

Though I would carefully avoid giving unnecessary offence, yet I am inclined to believe, that all those who espouse the doctrine of reconciliation, may be included within the following descriptions. Interested men, who are not to be trusted; weak men, who *cannot* see; prejudiced men, who *will not* see; and a certain set of moderate men, who think better of the European world than it deserves; and this last class, by an ill-judged deliberation, will be the cause of more calamities to this continent, than all the other three.

It is the good fortune of many to live distant from the scene of sorrow; the evil is not sufficient brought to *their* doors to make *them* feel the precariousness with which all American property is possessed. But let our imaginations transport us for a few moments to Boston, that seat of wretchedness will teach us wisdom, and instruct us for ever to renounce a power in whom we can have no trust, the inhabitants of that unfortunate city, who but a few months ago were in ease and affluence, have now, no other alternative than to stay and starve, or turn out to beg. Endangered by the fire of their friends if they continue within the city, and plundered by the soldiery if they leave it. In their present condition they are prisoners without the hope of redemption, and in a general attack for their relief, they would be exposed to the fury of both armies.

Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offences of Britain, and still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, "*Come, come, we shall be friends again, for all this.*" But examine the passions and feelings of mankind, bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me, whether you can hereafter love, honour, and faithfully serve

serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land? If you cannot do all these, then are you only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon posterity. Your future connexion with Briton, whom you can neither love nor honour, will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a relapse more wretched than the first. But if you say, you can still pass the violations over, then I ask, Hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child, by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have and still can shake hands with the murderers, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant.

This is not inflaming or exaggerating matters, by trying them by those feelings and affections which nature justifies, and without which, we should be incapable of discharging the social duties of life, or enjoying the felicities of it. I mean not to exhibit horror for the purpose of provoking revenge, but to awaken us from fatal and unmanly slumbers, that we may pursue determinately some fixed object. It is not in the power of Britain or of Europe to conquer America, if she do not conquer herself by *delay* and *timidity*. The present winter is worth an age, it rightly employed, but if neglected, the whole continent will partake of the misfortune; and there is no punishment which that man will not deserve, be he who, or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful.

It is repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things, to all examples from former ages, to suppose, that this continent can longer remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain does not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan short of separation, which can promise the continent even a year's security. Reconciliation

is *now* a fallacious dream. Nature hath deserted the connexion, and art cannot supply her place. For, as Milton wisely expresses, "Never can true reconciliation grow, where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep."

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and only tended to convince us, that nothing flatters vanity, or confirms obstinacy in Kings more than repeated petitioning—and nothing hath contributed more than that very measure to make the Kings of Europe absolute: Witness Denmark and Sweden. Wherefore, since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake, let us come to a final separation, and not leave the next generation to be cutting throats, under the violated unmeaning names of parent and child.

To say, they will never attempt it again is idle and visionary, we thought so at the repeal of the stamp-act, yet a year or two undeceived us; as well may we suppose that nations, which have been once defeated, will never renew the quarrel.

As to government matters, it is not in the power of Britain to do this continent justice: The business of it will soon be two weighty, and intricate, to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience, by a power so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us, they cannot govern us. To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or a petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which when obtained requires five or six more to explain it in, will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness——There was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease.

Small islands, not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something very absurd in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet, and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverse the common order of nature, it is evident they belong to different systems; England to Europe, America to itself.

I am

I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment to espouse the doctrine of separation and independance ; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded, that it is the true interest of this continent to be so ; that every thing short of *that* is mere patchwork, that it can afford no lasting felicity,——that it is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time, when, a little more, a little farther, would have rendered this continent the glory of the earth.

As Britain hath not manifested the least inclination towards a compromise, we may be assured that no terms can be obtained worthy the acceptance of the continent, or any ways equal to the expence of blood and treasure we have been already put to.

The object contended for, ought always to bear some just proportion to the expence. The removal of N——, or the whole detestable junto, is a matter unworthy the millions we have expended. A temporary stoppage of trade, was an inconvenience, which would sufficiently have ballanced the repeal of all the acts complained of, had such repeals been obtained ; but if the whole continent must take up arms, if every man must be a soldier, it is scarcely worth our while to fight against a contemptible ministry only. Dearly, dearly, do we pay for the repeal of the acts, if that is all we fight for ; for, in a just estimation, it is as great a folly to pay a Bunker-hill price for law as for land. As I have always considered the independency of this continent as an event which sooner or later must arrive, so from the late rapid progress of the continent to maturity, the event could not be far off. Wherefore, on the breaking out of hostilities, it was not worth while to have disputed a matter which time would have finally redressed, unless we meant to be in earnest ; otherwise, it is like wasting an estate on a suit at law, to regulate the trespasses of a tenant, whose lease is just expiring. No man was a warmer wisher for reconciliation than myself before the fatal nineteenth § of April, 1775, but the moment the event of that day was made known,

§ Lexington.

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But, admitting that matters were now made up, what would be the event? I answer, the ruin of the continent.—And that for several reasons.

First, The powers of governing still remaining in the hands of the king, he will have a negative over the whole legislation of this continent. And

is he, or is he not, a proper man to say to these colonies, “*You shall make no laws but what I please?*” And is there any inhabitant in America so ignorant, as not to know, that according to what is called the *present constitution*, that this continent can make no laws but what the king gives leave to? and is there any man so unwise as not to see, that (considering what has happened) he will suffer no law to be made here, but such as suits *his* purpose? We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America, as by submitting to laws made for us in England. After matters are made up (as it is called) can there be any doubt, but the whole power of the crown will be exerted to keep this continent as low and as humble as possible? Instead of going forward, we shall go backward, or be perpetually quarreling, or ridiculously petitioning.—

To bring the matter to one point. Is the power who is jealous of our prosperity, a proper power to govern us? Whoever says *No* to this question, is an *independant*; for independency means no more, than whether we shall make our own laws, or

But the king, you will say, has a negative in England; the people there can make no laws without his consent. In point of right and good order, there is something very ridiculous, that a youth of twenty-one, (which hath often happened) shall say to several millions of people, older and wiser than himself, I forbid this or that act of yours to be law. But in this place I decline this sort of reply, though I will never cease to expose the absurdity of it, and only answer

swer, that England being the king's residence, and America not so, makes quite another case. The king's negative *here* is ten times more dangerous than it can be in England, for *there* he will scarcely refuse his consent to a bill for putting England into as strong a state of defence as possible, and in America he would never suffer such a bill to be passed.

America is only a secondary object in the system of British politics, England consults the good of this country, no farther than it answers her own purpose. Wherefore her own interest leads her to suppress the growth of *ours* in every case which doth not promote her advantage, or in the least interfere with it. A pretty state we should soon be in under such a second-hand government, considering what has happened! Men do not change from enemies to friends by the alteration of a name: and in order to shew that reconciliation *now* is a dangerous doctrine, I affirm, *that it would be policy at this time to repeal the acts for the sake of re-instating the government of the provinces; in order,*

Secondly, That as even the best terms which we can expect to obtain, can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of government by guardianship, which can last no longer than 'till the colonies come of age, so the general state and face of things in the interim, will be unsettled and unpromising. Emigrants of property will not choose to come to a country whose form of government hangs but by a thread, and who is every day tottering on the brink of commotion and disturbance; and numbers of the present inhabitants would lay hold of the interval, to dispose of their effects, and quit the continent.

But the most powerful of all arguments, is, that nothing but independance, i. e. a continental form of government, can keep the peace of the continent, and preserve it inviolate from civil wars. I dread the event of a reconciliation with Britain now, as it is more than probable, that it will be followed by a revolt somewhere or other, the consequences of which may be far more fatal than all the malice of Britain.

Thousands are already ruined by British barbarity ; (thousands more will probably suffer the same fate). Those men have other feelings than us who have nothing suffered. All they *now* possess is liberty, what they before enjoyed is sacrificed to its service, and having nothing more to lose, they disdain submission. Besides, the general temper of the colonies, towards a British government, will be like that of a youth, who is nearly out of his time ; they will care very little about her. And a government which cannot preserve the peace, is no government at all, and in that case we pay our money for nothing ; and pray what is it that Britain can do, whose power will be wholly on paper, should a civil tumult break out the very day after reconciliation ? I have heard some men say, many of whom I believe spoke without thinking, that they dreaded an independance, fearing it would produce civil wars. It is but seldom that our first thoughts are truly correct, and that is the case here ; for there are ten times more to dread from a patched up connection, than from independance. I make the sufferers case my own, and I protest, that were I driven from house and home, my property destroyed, and my circumstances ruined, that as man, sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrine of reconciliation, or consider myself bound thereby.

The colonies have manifested such a spirit of good order and obedience to continental government, as is sufficient to make every reasonable person easy and happy on that head. No man can assign the least pretence for his fears, on any other grounds than such as are truly childish and ridiculous, viz. that one colony will be striving for superiority over another.

Where there are no distinctions, there can be no superiority, perfect equality affords no temptation. The republics of Europe are all (and we may say always) in peace. Holland and Swisserland are without wars, foreign or domestic ; monarchial governments, it is true, are never long at rest ; the crown itself is a temptation to enterprising *ruffians* at home ; and that degree of pride and insolence ever attendant on regal authority swells into a rupture with foreign powers, in instances where a republican government, by being formed on more natural principles, would negotiate the mistake.

If there is any true cause of fear respecting independance, it is because no plan is yet laid down. Men do not see their way out.—Wherefore, as an opening into that business, I offer the following hints; at the same time modestly affirming, that I have no other opinion of them myself, than that they may be the means of giving rise to something better.—Could the straggling thoughts of individuals be collected, they would frequently form materials for wise and able men to improve into useful matter.

LET the assemblies be annual, with a president only.—The representation more equal. Their business wholly domestic, and subject to the authority of a Continental Congress.

Let each colony be divided into six, eight, or ten convenient districts, each district to send a proper number of delegates to congress, so that each colony send at least thirty. The whole number in congress, will be at least 390. Each congress to fit and to choose a president by the following method. When the delegates are met, let a colony be taken from the whole thirteen colonies by lot, after which, let the whole congress choose (by ballot) a president from out of the delegates of *that* province. In the next congress, let a colony be taken by lot from twelve only, omitting that colony from which the president was taken in the former congress, and so proceeding on 'till the whole thirteen shall have had their proper rotation. And in order that nothing may pass into a law but what is satisfactorily just, not less than three fifths of the congress to be called a majority.—He that will promote discord under a government so equally formed as this, would have joined Lucifer in his revolt.

But as there is a peculiar delicacy, from whom, or in what manner this business must first arise, and as it seems most agreeable and consistent, that it should come from some intermediate body between the governed and the governors, that is, between the congress and the people, let a continental conference be held in the following manner, and for the following purpose.

A committee of twenty-six members of congress, viz. two for each colony. Two members from each house of assembly, or provincial convention; and five representatives of the people at large, to be chosen in the capital city or town
of

of each province, for and in behalf of the whole province, by as many qualified voters as shall think proper to attend from all parts of the province for that purpose; or, if more convenient the representatives may be chosen in two or three of the most populous parts thereof. In this conference, thus assembled, will be united, the two grand principles of business, *knowledge* and *power*. The members of congress, assemblies, or conventions, by having had experience in national concerns, will be able and useful counsellors, and the whole, being impowered by the people, will have a truly legal authority.

The conferring members being met, let their business be to frame a CONTINENTAL CHARTER, or charter of the United Colonies: (answering to what is called the Magna Charta of England) fixing the number and manner of choosing members of congress, members of assembly, with their date of sitting, and drawing the line of business and jurisdiction between them: (Always remembering, that our strength is continental, not provincial:) Securing freedom and property to all men, and above all things, the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience: with such other matter as is necessary for a charter to contain. Immediately after which, the said conference to dissolve, and the bodies which shall be chosen conformable to the said charter, to be the legislators and governors of this continent for the time being: Whose peace and happiness may God preserve, Amen.

Should any body of men be hereafter delegated for this or some similar purpose, I offer them the following extracts from the wise observer on governments. *Dragonetti*. "The science" says he "of the politician consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of individual happiness, with the least national expence."

Dragonetti on virtue and rewards."

But where, say some, is the king of America? I'll tell you, friend, he reigns above, and doth not make havoc of mankind

Yet that we may not appear to be defective even in earthly honours, let a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the charter; let it be brought forth placed on the divine law, the word of God; let a crown be placed thereon, by which the world may know that

that so far was approve of monarchy, that in America **THE LAW IS KING.** For as in absolute governments the king is law, so in free countries the law *ought* to be king; and there ought to be no other. But lest any ill use should afterwards arise, let the crown, at the conclusion of the ceremony, be demolished, and scattered among the people whose right it is.

A government of our own is our natural right: And when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced, that it is infinitely wiser and safer, to form a constitution of our own in a cool deliberated manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance, if we omit it now, some * Massanello may hereafter arise, who laying hold of popular disquietudes, may collect together the desperate and the discontented, and by assuming to themselves the powers of government, may sweep away the liberties of the continent like a deluge. Should the government of America return again into the hands of Britain the tottering situation of things will be a temptation for some desperate adventurer to try his fortune; and in such a case; what relief can Britain give? Ere she should hear the news, the fatal business might be done; and ourselves suffering like the wretched Britons under the oppression of the conqueror. Ye that oppose independence now, ye know not what ye do; ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny.

There are thousands and tens of thousands, who would think it glorious to expel from the continent that barbarous and hellish power, which hath stirred up the Indians and Negroes to destroy us; the cruelty hath a double guilt, it is dealing brutally by us, and treacherously by them.

To talk of friendship with those in whom our reason forbids us to have faith, and our affections wounded through a thousand pores, instruct us to detest, is madness and folly. Every day wears out the little remains of kindred between us and them, and can there be any reason to hope, that as the

* Thomas Anello otherwise Massanello, a fisherman of Naples, who after spurring up his countrymen in the public market-place, against the oppression of the Spaniards, to whom the place was then subject, prompted them to revolt, and in the space of a day became king.

relationship expires, the affection will increase, or that we shall agree better, when we have ten times more and greater concerns to quarrel over than ever!

Ye that tell us of harmony and reconciliation, can ye restore to us the time that is past? Can ye give to prostitution its former innocence? Neither can ye reconcile Britain and America. The last cord is now broken, the people of England are presenting addresses against us. These are injuries which nature cannot forgive she would cease to be nature if she did. As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the continent forgive the murders of Britain. The Almighty hath implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings for good and wise purposes. They are the guardians of his image in our hearts. They distinguish us from the herd of common animals. The social compact would dissolve, and justice be extirpated the earth, or have only a casual existence were we callous to the touches of affection. The robber and the murderer, would often escape unpunished, did not the injuries which our temper sustain, provoke us into justice.

O ye that love mankind; ye that dare oppose, not only the tyranny, stand forth; every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia and Africa, have long expelled her—Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

Of the present ABILITY of AMERICA, with some Miscellaneous REFLECTIONS.

I Have never met with a man, either in England or America, who hath not confessed his opinion, that a separation between the countries, would take place one time or other. And there is no instance, in which we have shewn less judgment, than in endeavouring to describe, what we call the ripeness or fitness of the continent for independance.

As all men allow the measure and vary only, in their opinion of the time, let us, in order to remove mistakes, take a general survey of things, and endeavour, if possible, to find out the *very* time. But we need not go far, the inquiry ceases

ceases at once for, the *time hath found us*. The general concurrence, the glorious union of all things prove the fact.

It is not in numbers, but in unity, that our great strength lies; yet our present numbers are sufficient to repel the force of all the world. The continent hath, at this time, the largest body of armed and disciplined men of any power under Heaven; and is just arrived at that pitch of strength, in which no single colony is able to support itself, and the whole, when united, can accomplish the matter, and either more, or, less than this, might be fatal in its effects. Our land force is already sufficient, and as to naval affairs, we cannot be insensible, that Britain would never suffer an American man of war to be built, while the continent remained in her hands. Wherefore, we should be no forwarder an hundred years hence in that branch, than we are now; but, the truth is, we should be less so, because the timber of the country is every day diminishing, and that, which will remain at last, will be far off and difficult to procure.

Were the continent crowded with inhabitants, her sufferings under the present circumstances would be intolerable. The more sea-port towns we had, the more should we have both to defend and lose. Our present numbers are so happily proportioned to our wants, that no man need be idle. The diminution of trade affords an army, and the necessities of an army create a new trade.

Debts we have none; and whatever we may contract on this account will serve as a glorious memento of our virtue. Can we but leave posterity with a settled form of government, an independent constitution of its own, the purchase at any price will be cheap. But to expend millions for the sake of getting a few vile acts repealed, and routing the present ministry only, is unworthy the charge, and is using posterity with the utmost cruelty; because it is leaving them the great work to do, and a debt upon their backs, from which they derive no advantage. Such a thought is unworthy a man of honour, and is the true characteristic of a narrow heart and a peddling politician.

The debt we may contract doth not deserve our regard, if the work be but accomplished. No nation ought to be with-

out debt. A national debt is a national bond; and when it bears no interest, is in no case a grievance. Britain is oppressed with a debt of upwards of one hundred and fifty millions sterling, for which she pays upwards of four millions interest. As a compensation for her debt, she has a large navy; America is without a debt, and without a navy; yet for the twentieth part of the English national debt, could have a navy as large again. The navy of England is not worth, at this time, more than three millions and an half sterling.

The first and second editions of this pamphlet were published without the following calculations, which are now given as a proof that the above estimation of the navy is a just one. See *Entic's Naval History, Intro* page 56.

The charge of building a ship of each rate, and furnishing her with masts, yards, sails, and rigging, together with a proportion of eight months boatwain's and carpenter's sea-stores, as calculated by Mr Burchett, secretary to the navy.

| | £. |
|------------------------|--------|
| For a ship of 100 guns | 35,553 |
| 90 | 29,886 |
| 80 | 23,638 |
| 70 | 17,785 |
| 60 | 14,197 |
| 50 | 10,606 |
| 40 | 7,855 |
| 30 | 5,846 |
| 20 | 3,710 |

And from hence it is easy to sum up the value, or cost rather, of the whole British navy; which in the year 1757, when it was at its greatest glory, consisted of the following ships and guns:

| Ships. | Guns. | Cost of one. | Cost of all. |
|------------------|---|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 6 | — 100 | — 35,553 ^l . | — 213,318 ^l . |
| 12 | — 90 | — 29,886 | — 358,632 |
| 12 | — 80 | — 23,638 | — 283,656 |
| 43 | — 70 | — 17,785 | — 764,755 |
| 35 | — 60 | — 14,197 | — 496,895 |
| 40 | — 50 | — 10,606 | — 424,240 |
| 45 | — 40 | — 7,558 | — 340,110 |
| 58 | — 20 | — 3,710 | — 251,180 |
| 85 | floops, bombs, and fireships, one with another. | 2,000 | 170,000 |
| | | | Cost 3,266,786 |
| Remains for guns | | | 233,214 |
| | | | 3,500,000 |

No country on the globe is so happily situated, or so internally capable of raising a fleet as America. Tar, timber, iron, and cordage, are her natural produce. We need go abroad for nothing. Whereas the Dutch, who make large profits by hiring out their ships of war to the Spaniards and Portuguese, are obliged to import most of their materials they use. We ought to view the building the fleet as an article of commerce, it being the natural manufactory of this country. It is the best money we can lay out. A navy, when finished, is worth more than it cost; and is that nice point of national policy, in which commerce and protection are united. Let us build; if we want them not, we can sell; and by that means replace our paper currency with ready gold and silver.

In point of manning a fleet, people in general run into great errors; it is not necessary that one fourth part should be sailors. The Terrible privateer, Captain Death, stood the hottest engagement of any ship last war, yet had not twenty sailors on board, though her compliment of men was upwards of two hundred. A few able and social sailors will soon instruct a sufficient number of active landmen in the common work of a ship. Wherefore, we never can be more capable to begin on maritime matters than now while our timber is standing, our fisheries blocked up, and our sailors and

and shipwrights out of employ. Men of war of seventy and eighty guns were built forty years ago in New-England, and why not the same now? Ship-building is America's greatest pride, and in which she will in time excel the whole world. The great empires of the east are mostly inland, and consequently excluded from the possibility of rivalling her. Africa is in a state of barbarism; and no power in Europe hath either such an extent of coast, or such an internal supply of materials. Where nature hath given the one, she has withheld the other; to America only hath she been liberal to both. The vast empire of Russia is almost shut out from the sea: Wherefore, her boundless forests, her tar, iron, and cordage, are only articles of commerce.

In point of safety, ought we to be without a fleet? We are not the little people now, which we were sixty years ago; at that time we might have trusted our property in the streets, or fields rather; and slept securely without locks or bolts to our doors or windows. The case now is altered, and our methods of defence ought to improve with our increase of property. A common pirate, twelve months ago, might have come up the Delaware, and laid the city of Philadelphia under instant contribution, for what some he pleased; and the same might have happened to other places. Nay, any daring fellow, in a brig of fourteen or sixteen guns, might have robbed the whole continent, and carried off half a million of money. These are circumstances which demand our attention, and point out the necessity of naval protection.

Some, perhaps, will say, that after we have made it up with Britain she will protect us. Can we be so unwise as to mean that she shall keep a navy in our harbour for that purpose? Common sense will tell us, that the power which hath endeavoured to subdue us, is of all others the most improper to defend us. Conquest may be effected under the pretence of friendship; and ourselves, after a long and brave resistance, be at last cheated into slavery. And if her ships are not to be admitted into our harbours, I would ask, how is she to protect us? A navy, three or four thousand miles off, can be of little use; and on sudden emergencies, none at all. Wherefore, if we must hereafter protect

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tect ourselves, why not do it for another? Why do it for another.

The English list of ships of war, is long and formidable, but not a tenth part of them are at any one time fit for service, numbers of them not in being; yet their names are prompously continued in the list, if only a plank be left of the ship; And not a fifth part of such as are fit for service, can be spared on any one station at one time. The East and West Indies, Mediterranean, Africa, and other parts over which Britain extends her claim, make large demands upon her navy. From a mixture of prejudice and inattention, we have contracted a false notion respecting the navy of England, and have talked as if we should have the whole of it to encounter at once, and for that reason, supposed, that we must have one as large; which not being instantly practicable, have been made use of by a set of disguised Tories to discourage our beginning thereon. Nothing can be farther from truth than this; for if America had only a twentieth part of the naval force of Britain, she would be by far an overmatch for her; because, as we neither have, nor claim and foreign dominion, our whole force will be employed on our own coast, where we should, in the long run, have two to one the advantage of those who had three or four thousand miles to sail over, before they could attack us, and the same distance to return in order to refit and recruit. And although Britain, by her fleet, hath a check over our trade to Europe, we have as large a one over her trade to the West Indies, which, by laying in the neighbourhood of the continent, is entirely at its mercy.

Some method might be fallen on to keep up a naval force in time of peace, if we should not judge it necessary to support a constant navy. If premiums were to be given to merchants, to build and employ in their service, ships mounted with twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty guns (the premiums to be in proportion to the loss of bulk to the merchants) fifty or sixty of those of those ships, with a few guardships on constant duty, would keep up a sufficient navy, and that without burdening ourselves with the evil so loudly complained of in England, of suffering their fleet, in time of peace to lie rotting in the docks. To unite the sinews of commerce and defence. is sound policy; for when our strength and our riches

elches play into each other's hands, we need fear no external enemy.

In almost every article of defence we abound. Hemp flourishes even to rankness, so that we need not want cordage. Our iron is superior to that of other countries. Our small arms equal to any in the world. Cannon we can cast at pleasure. Saltpetre and gunpowder we are every day producing. Our knowledge is hourly improving. Resolution is our inherent character, and courage hath never yet forsaken us. Wherefore, what is it that we want? Why is it that we hesitate? From Britain we expect nothing but ruin. If she is once admitted to the government of America again, this continent will not be worth living in. Jealousies will be always arising; insurrections will be constantly happening; and who will go forth to quell them? Who will venture his life to reduce his own countrymen to a foreign obedience? The difference between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, respecting some unlocated lands, shews the insignificance of a British government, and fully proves, that nothing but Continental authority, can regulate Continental matters.

Another reason why the present time is preferable to all others, is, that the fewer our numbers are, the more land there is yet unoccupied, which instead of being lavished by the king on his worthless dependants, may be hereafter applied, not only to the discharge of the present debt, but to the constant support of government. No nation under Heaven hath such an advantage as this.

The infant state of the colonies, as it is called, so far from being against, is an argument in favour of independence. We are sufficiently numerous, and were we more so, we might be less united. It is a matter worthy of observation, that the more a country is peopled, the smaller their armies are. In military numbers, the ancients far exceeded the moderns: and the reason is evident, for trade being the consequence of population, men become too much absorbed thereby to attend to any thing else. Commerce diminishes the spirit both of patriotism and military defence. And history sufficiently informs us, that the bravest achievements were always accomplished in the non-age of a nation. With the increase of commerce, England hath lost its spirit. The city of London, notwithstanding its numbers, submits

to continued insults with the patience of a coward. The more men have to lose, the less willing are they to venture. The rich are in general slaves to fear, and submit to ycourtly power with the trembling duplicity of a spaniel.

Youth is the seed time of good habits, as well in nations as in individuals. It might be difficult, if not impossible, to form the continent into one government half a century hence. The vast variety of interests, occasioned by an increase of trade and population, would create confusion. Colony would be against colony. Each being able might scorn each other's assistance: and while the proud and foolish gloried in their little distinctions, the wise would lament, that the union had not been formed before. Wherefore, the *present time* is the *true time* for establishing it. The intimacy which is contracted in infancy, and the friendship which is formed in misfortune, are of all others the most lasting and unalterable. Our present union is marked with both these characters: we are young, and we have been distressed; but our concord hath withstood our troubles, and fixes a memorable æra for posterity to glory in.

The present time likewise is that peculiar time, which never happens to a nation but one, viz. the time of forming itself into a government. Most nations have let slip the opportunity, and by that means have been compelled to receive laws from their conquerors, instead of making laws for themselves. First, they had a king, then a form of government, whereas, the articles or charter of government, should be formed first, and men delegated to execute them afterwards: but from the errors of other nations, let us learn wisdom, and lay hold of the present opportunity—*To begin government at the right end.*

When William the Conqueror subdued England, he gave them law at the point of the sword; and until we consent, that the seat of government, in America, be legally and authoritatively occupied, we shall be in danger of having it filled by some fortunate ruffian, who may treat us in the same manner, and then, where will be our freedom? where our property?

As to religion, I hold it to be the indispensable duty of all government, to protect all conscientious professors thereof, and I know of no other business which government hath to do

C O M M O N S E N S E .

do therewith. Let a man throw aside that narrowness of soul, that selfishness of principle, which the niggards of all professions are so unwilling to part with, and he will be at once delivered of his fears on that head. Suspicion is the companion of mean souls, and the bane of all good society. For myself, I fully and conscientiously believe, that it is the will of the Almighty, that there should be a diversity of religious opinions among us : it affords a larger field for our christian kindness. Were we all of one way of thinking, our religious dispositions would want matter for probation ; and on this liberal principle, I look on the various denominations among us, to be like children of the same family, differing only, in what is called, their christian names.

In page twenty-five, I threw out a few thoughts on the propriety of a continental charter, (for I only presume to offer hints, not plans) and in this place, I take the liberty of re-mentioning the subject, by observing, that a charter is to be understood as a bond of solemn obligation, which the whole enters into, to support the right of every separate part, whether of religion, personal freedom, or property. A firm bargain, and a right reckoning make long friends.

In a former page I likewise mentioned the necessity of a large and equal representation ; and there is no political matter which more deserves our attention. A small number of electors, or a small number of representatives, are equally dangerous. But if the number of the representatives be not only small, but unequal, the danger is increased. As an instance of this, I mention the following ; when the associators petition was before the house of assembly of Pennsylvania ; twenty-eight members only were present, all the Bucks county members, being eight, voted against it, and had seven of the Chester members done the same, this whole province had been governed by two countries only, and this danger it is always exposed to. The unwarrantable stretch likewise, which that house made in their last sitting, to gain an undue authority over the delegates of that province, ought to warn the people at large, how they trust power out of their own hands. A set of instructions for the delegates were put together, which in point of sense and business would have dishonoured a school-boy, and after being approved by a *few*, a *very few* without doors, were carried
into

into the house, and there passed *in behalf of the whole colony*; whereas, did the whole colony know, with what ill will that house hath entered on some necessary public measures, they would not hesitate a moment to think them unworthy of such a trust.

Immediate necessity makes many things convenient, which if continued, would grow into oppressions. Expediency and right are different things. When the calamities of America required a consultation, there was no method so ready, or at that time so proper, as to appoint persons from the several houses of assembly for that purpose; and the wisdom with which they have proceeded hath preserved this continent from ruin. But as it is more than probable that we shall never be without a CONGRESS, every well-wisher to good order, must own, that the mode for choosing members of that body, deserves consideration. And I put it as a question to those who make a study of mankind, whether *representation and election* is not too great a power for one and the same body of men to possess? When we are planning for posterity, we ought to remember, that virtue is not hereditary.

It is from our enemies that we often gain excellent maxims, and are frequently surprized into reason by their mistakes. Mr. Cornwall, (one of the lords of the treasury) treated the petition of the New-York assembly with contempt, because *that* house, he said, consisted but of twenty-six members, which trifling number, he argued, could not with decency, be put for the whole. We thank him for his involuntary honesty†.

To conclude, however strange it may appear to some, or however unwilling they may be to think so, matters not, but many strong and striking reasons may be given, to shew, that nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined declaration for independance. Some of which are,

First, It is the custom of nations, when any two are at war, for some other powers, not engaged in the quarrel, to step in as mediators, and bring about the preliminaries of a

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peace;

† Those who would fully understand of what great consequence a large and equal representation is to a state, should read Burgh's Political Disquisitions.

peace ; but while America calls herself the subject of Great-Britain, no power, however well disposed she may be, can offer her mediation. Wherefore, in our present state, we may quarrel on for ever.

Secondly, It is unreasonable to suppose, that France or Spain will give us any kind of assistance, if we mean only to make use of that assistance for the purpose of repairing the breach, and strengthening the connection between Britain and America ; because, those powers would be sufferers by the consequences.

Thirdly, While we profess ourselves the subjects of Britain, we must, in the eye of foreign nations, be considered as rebels. The precedent is somewhat dangerous to *their peace*, for men to be in arms under the name of subjects ; we, on the spot, can solve the paradox : but, to unite resistance and subjection, requires an idea much too refined for common understanding.

Fourthly, Were a manifesto to be published, and dispatched to foreign courts, setting forth the miseries we have endured, and the peaceable methods we have ineffectually used for redress ; declaring, at the same time, that not being able, any longer, to live happily or safely under the cruel disposition of the British court, we had been driven to the necessity of breaking off all connection with her ; at the same time, assuring all such courts of our peaceable disposition towards them, and of our desire of entering into trade with them : Such a memorial would produce more good effects to this continent, than if a ship were freighted with petitions to Britain.

Under our present denomination of British subjects, we can neither be received nor heard abroad : The custom of all courts is against us, and will be so, until, by an independance, we take rank with other nations.

These proceedings may at first appear strange and difficult ; but, like all other steps which we have already passed over, will, in a little time, become familiar and agreeable ; and, until an independance is declared, the continent will feel itself like a man who continues putting off some unpleasant business, from day to day, yet knows it must be done, hates to set about it, wishes it over, and is continually haunted with the thoughts of its necessity.

A P P E N D I X.

SINCE the publication of the first edition of this pamphlet, or rather, on the same day on which it came out, made its appearance in this city. Had the spirit of prophecy directed the birth of this production, it could not have brought it forth at a more seasonable juncture, or a more necessary time. The bloody-mindedness of the one, shew the necessity of pursuing the doctrine of the other. Men read by way of revenge. And, instead of terrifying prepared a way for the manly principles of Independence.

Ceremony, and even silence, from whatever motive they may arise, have a hurtful tendency, when they give the least degree of countenance to base and wicked performances; wherefore, if this maxim be admitted, it naturally follows,

deserved, and still deserves, a general execration both by the Congress and the people. Yet, as the domestic tranquility of a nation, depends greatly, on the *chastity* of what may properly be called *national manners*, it is often better, to pass some things over in silent disdain, than to make use of such new methods of dislike, as might introduce the least innovation, on that guardian of our peace and safety. And, perhaps, it is chiefly owing to this prudent delicacy, that hath not, before now, suffered a public execution. The , if it may be called one, is nothing better than a wilful audacious libel against the truth, the common good, and the existence of mankind, and is a formal and pompous method of offering up human sacrifices to the pride of tyrants. But this general massacre of mankind, is one of the privileges, and the certain consequence of ; for as nature knows them *not*, they know *not her*, and although they are beings of our *own* creating, they know *not us*, and are become the gods of their creators. The hath one good quality, which is, that it is not calculated to deceive, neither can we, even if we would, be deceived by it. Brutality and tyranny appear on the face of it. It leaves us at no loss; and every line convinces, even in the moment of reading

reading, that he, who hunts the woods for prey, the naked and untutored Indian, is less a savage than

Sir John Dalrymple, the putative father of a whining jesuitical piece, fallaciously called. "*The Address of the people of ENGLAND to the inhabitants of AMERICA*," hath, perhaps, from a vain supposition, that the people *here* were to be frightened at the pomp and description of a king, given, (though very unwisely on this part) the real character of the present one: "But," says this writer, "if you are inclined to pay compliments to an administration, which we do not complain of," (meaning the Marquis of Rockingham's at the repeal of the stamp act) "it is very unfair in you to withhold them from that prince, *by whose NOB ALONE they were permitted to do any thing.*" This is toryism with a witness! Here is idolatry over without a mask. And he who can calmly hear, and digest such doctrine, hath forfeited his claim to rationality—an apostate from the order of manhood; and ought to be considered—as one, who hath not only given up the proper dignity of man, but sunk himself beneath the rank of animals, and contemptibly crawl through the world like a worm.

: It is *now* the interest of America to provide for herself. She hath already a large and young family, whom it is more her duty to take care of, than to be granting away her property, to support a power who is become a reproach to the names of men and christians—YE, whose office it is to watch over the morals of a nation, of whatsoever sect or denomination ye are of, as well as ye, who, are more immediately the guardians of the public liberty, if ye wish to preserve your native country uncontaminated by European corruption, ye must in secret wish a separation—But leaving the moral part to private reflection, I shall chiefly confine my farther remarks to the following heads.

First, That it is the interest of America to be separated from Britain.

Secondly

Secondly. Which is the easiest and most practicable plan, RECONCILIATION OF INDEPENDANCE ; with some occasional remarks.

In support of the first, I could, if I judged it proper, produce the opinion of some of the ablest and most experienced men on this continent ; and whose sentiments, on that head, are not yet publicly known. It is in reality a self-evident position : For no nation in a state of foreign dependance, limited in its commerce, and cramped and fettered in its legislative powers, can ever arrive at any material eminence. America doth not yet know what opulence is ; and although the progress which she hath made stands unparalleled in the history of other nations, it is but childhood, compared with what she would be capable of arriving at, had she, as she ought to have, the legislative powers in her own hands. England is, at this time, proudly coveting what would do her no good, were she to accomplish it ? and the continent hesitating on a matter, which will be her final ruin if neglected. It is the commerce and not the conquest of America, by which England is to be benefited, and that would in a great measure continue, were the countries as independent of each other as France and Spain ; because in many articles, neither can go to a better market. But it is the independance of this country on Britain or any other, which is now the main and only object worthy of contention, and which, like all other truths discovered by necessity, will appear clearer and stronger every day.

First. Because it will come to that one time or other.

Secondly. Because, the longer it is delayed the harder it will be to accomplish.

I have frequently amused myself both in public and private companies, with silently remarking, the specious errors of those who speak without reflecting. And among the many which I have heard, the following seems the most general, viz. that had this rupture happened forty or fifty years hence, instead of *now* the continent would have been more able to have shaken off the dependance. To which I reply, that our military ability, *at this time*, arises from the experience gained in the last war, and which in forty or fifty years time, would have been totally extinct. The continent, would
not,

not, by that time, have had a general, or even a military officer left; and we, or those who may succeed us, would have been as ignorant of martial matters as the ancient Indians: And this single position, closely attended to, will unanswerable prove, that the present time is preferable to all others. The argument turns thus—at the conclusion of the last war, we had experience, but wanted numbers; and forty or fifty years hence, we should have numbers, without experience; whereof, the proper point of time, must be some particular point between the two extremes, in which a sufficiency of the former remains, and a proper increase of the latter is obtained: And that point of time is the present time.

The reader will pardon this digression, as it does not properly come under the head I first set out with, and to which I shall again return by the following position, viz.

Should affairs be patched up with Britain, and she to remain the governing and sovereign power of America, (which, as matters are now circumstanced, is giving up the point entirely) we shall deprive ourselves of the very means of sinking the debt we have or may contract. The value of the back lands, which some of the provinces are clandestinely deprived of, by the unjust extension of the limits of Canada, valued only at five pounds sterling per hundred acres, amount to upwards of twenty-five millions, Pennsylvania currency;—and the quit-rents at one penny sterling per acre, to two millions yearly.

It is by the sale of those lands that the debt may be sunk, without burthen to any, and the quit-rent reserved thereon, will always lessen, and in time will wholly support the yearly expence of government. It matters not how long the debt is in paying, so that the lands when sold be applied to the discharge of it, and for the execution of which, the Congress for the time being will be the continental trustees.

I proceed now to the second head, viz. Which is the easiest and most practicable plan, RECONCILIATION OR INDEPENDANCE; with some occasional remarks.

He who takes nature for his guide is not easily beaten out of his argument, and on that ground, I answer generally—
that INDEPENDANCE *being a* SINGLE SIMPLE
 LINE

LINE, contained within ourselves ; and reconciliation, a matter exceedingly perplexed and complicated, and in which a treacherous capricious court is to interfere, gives the answer without a doubt.

The present state of America, is truly alarming to every man who is capable of reflection. Without law, without government, without any other mode of power than what is founded on, and granted by courtesy. Held together by an unexampled concurrence of sentiment, which is nevertheless subject to change, and which every secret enemy is endeavouring to dissolve. Our present condition is, legislation without law ; wisdom without a plan ; a constitution without a name ; and, what is strangely astonishing, perfect independance contending for dependance. The instance is without a precedent ; the case never existed before ; and who can tell what may be the event ? The property of no man is secure in the present unbraced system of things. The mind of the multitude is left at random, and seeing no fixed object before them, the pursue such as fancy or opinion starts. Nothing is criminal ; there is no such thing as treason ; wherefore, every one thinks himself at liberty to act as he pleases. The Tories dared not to have assembled offensively, had they known, that their lives, by that act, were forfeited by the laws of the state, A line of distinction should be drawn between English soldiers taken in battle, and inhabitants of America taken in arms. The first are prisoners, but the latter traitors. The one forfeits his liberty, the other his head.

Notwithstanding our wisdom, there is a visible feebleness in some of our proceedings, which gives encouragement to dissensions. The continental belt is too loosely buckled. And if something is not done in time, it will be too late to do any thing, and we shall fall into a state, in which neither *reconciliation* nor *independance* will be practicable. The and his worthless adherents are got at their old game of dividing the continent, and there are not wanting among us Printers, who will be busy in spreading specious falsehoods. The artful and hypocritical letter, which appeared a few months ago in two of the New-Yorkpapers, and likewise in two others, is an evidence that there are men who want either judgment or honesty.

It is easy getting into holes and corners, and talking of reconciliation : But do such men seriously consider, how difficult the task is, and how dangerous it may prove, should the continent divide thereon. Do they take within their view, all the various orders of men, whose situation and circumstances, as well as their own, are to be considered therein. Do they put themselves in the place of the sufferer whose *all* is *already* gone, and of the soldier who hath quitted *all* for the defence of his country. If their ill-judged moderation be suited to their own private situations only, regardless of others, the event will convince them, “ that they are reckoning without their host.”

Put us, says some, on the footing we were on in sixty-three : To which I answer, the request is not now in the power of Britain to comply with, neither will she propose it ; but if it were, and even should be granted, I ask, as a reasonable question. By what means is such a corrupt and faithless court to be kept to its engagements ? Another parliament, nay, even the present, may hereafter repeal the obligation, on the pretence of its being violently obtained, or unwisely granted ; and in that case, where is our redress ; No going to law with nations : cannon are the barristers of crowns ; and the sword, not of justice, but of war, decides the suit. To be on the footing of sixty-three, it is not sufficient, that the laws only be put on the same state, but, that our circumstances, likewise, be put on the same state ; our burnt and destroyed towns repaired or built up, our private losses made good, our public debts (contracted for defence) discharged ; otherwise we shall be millions worse than we were at that enviable period. Such a request, had it been complied with a year ago, it would have won the heart and soul of the Continent—but it is now too late, “ The Rubicon is passed.”

Besides, the taking up arms merely to enforce the repeal of a pecuniary law, seems as unwarrantable by the divine law, and as repugnant to human feelings, as the taking up arms to enforce obedience thereto. The object on either side, doth not justify the means ; for the lives of men are too valuable to be cast away on such trifles. It is the violence which is done and threatened to our persons ; the destruction of our properties by an armed force ; the invasion of our country by fire and sword, which conscientiously qualifies the use of arms :
And

And the instant, in which such a mode of defence became necessary, all subjection to Britain ought to have ceased; and the independency of America, should have been considered, as dating its æra from and published by, *the first musket that was fired against her*. This line is a line of consistency; neither drawn by caprice, nor extended by ambition; but produced by a chain of events, of which the colonies were not the authors.

I shall conclude these remarks, with the following timely and well intended hints: We ought to reflect, that there are three different ways, by which an independency can hereafter be effected; and that *one* of those *three*, will one day or other, be the fate of America, viz. By the legal voice of the people in Congress; by a military power; or by a mob: It may not always happen that our soldiers are citizens, and the multitude a body of reasonable men; virtue, as I have already remarked, is not hereditary, neither is it perpetual. Should an independency be brought about by the first of those means, we have every opportunity and every encouragement before us, to form the noblest purest constitution on the face of the earth. We have it in our power to begin the world over again. A situation, similar to the present, hath not happened since the days of Noah till now. The birth-day of a new world is at hand, and a race of men perhaps as numerous as all Europe contains, are to receive their portion of freedom from the event of a few months. The reflexion is awful—and in this point of view, how trifling, how ridiculous, do the little, paltry cavellings, of a few weak or interested men appear, when weighed against the business of a world.

Should we neglect the present favourable and inviting period, and an independence be hereafter affected by any other means, we must charge the consequence to ourselves, or to those rather, whose narrow and prejudiced souls, are habitually opposing the measure, without either inquiring or reflecting. There are reasons to be given in support of independence, which men should rather privately think of, than be publicly told of. We ought not now to be debating whether we shall be independent or not, but, anxious to accomplish it on a firm, secure, and honourable basis, and uneasy rather that it is not yet began upon. Every day convinces us of its necessity. **Even** the Tories (if such beings yet remain a

mong us) should, of all men, be the most solicitous to promote it; for, as the appointment of committees at first protected them from popular rage, so, a wise and well established form of government, will be the only certain means of continuing it securely to them. *Wherefore*, if they have not virtue enough to be WHIGS, they ought to have prudence enough to wish for independence.

In short, Independence is the only **BOND** that that can tie and keep us together. We shall then see our object, and our ears shall be legally shut against the schemes of an intriguing, as well, as a cruel enemy. We shall then too, be on a proper footing, to treat with Britain; for there is reason to conclude, that the pride of that court, will be less hurt by treating with the American states for terms of peace, than with those, whom she denominates, "rebellious subjects," for terms of accommodation. It is our delaying it that encourages her to hope for conquest, and our backwardness tends only to prolong the war. As we have, without any good effect therefrom, withheld our trade to obtain a redress of our grievances, let us *now* try the alternative, by *independantly* redressing them ourselves, and then offering to open the trade. The mercantile and reasonable part in England, will be still with us; because, peace *with* trade, is preferable to war *without* it. And if this offer be not accepted, other courts may be applied to.

On these grounds I rest the matter. And as no offer hath yet been made to refute the doctrine contained in the former editions of this pamphlet, it is a negative proof that either the doctrine cannot be refuted, or, that the party in favour of it are too numerous to be opposed. **WHEREFORE**, instead of gazing at each other with suspicious or doubtful curiosity, let each of us, hold out to his neighbour the hearty hand of friendship, and unite in drawing a line, which, like an act of oblivion, shall bury in forgetfulness every former dissention. Let the names of Whig and Tory be extinct; and let none other be heard among us, than those of *a good citizen, an open and resolute friend, and a virtuous supporter of the RIGHTS of MANKIND, and of the FREE AND INDEPENDANT STATES OF AMERICA.*

To the Representatives of the Religious Society of the People called Quakers, or to so many of them as were concerned in publishing a late Piece, entitled, "The ANCIENT TESTIMONY and PRINCIPLES of the People called QUAKERS renewed, with Respect to the KING and GOVERNMENT, and touching the COMMOTIONS now prevailing in these and other parts of AMERICA, addressed to the PEOPLE IN GENERAL."

THE Writer of this, is one of those few, who never dishonours religion either by ridiculing, or cavelling at any denomination whatsoever. To God, and not to man, are all men accountable on the score of religion. Wherefore, this epistle is not so properly addressed to you as a religious, but as a political body, dabbling in matters, which the professed quietude of your principles instruct you not to meddle with.

As you have, without a proper authority for so doing, put yourselves in the place of the whole body of the Quakers, so, the writer of this, in order to be on an equal rank with yourselves, is under the necessity, of putting himself in the place of all those, who, approve the very writings and principles against which, your testimony is directed: And he hath chosen this singular situation, in order, that you might discover in him that presumption of character which you cannot see in yourselves. For neither he nor you can have any claim or title to *Political Representation*.

When men have departed from the right way, it is no wonder that they stumble and fall. And it is evident from the manner in which ye have managed your testimony, that politics (as a religious body of men) is not your proper walk; however well adapted it might appear to you, it is, nevertheless, a jumble of good and bad put unwisely together, and the conclusion drawn therefrom, both unnatural and unjust.

The two first pages, (and the whole doth not make four) we give you credit for, and expect, the same civility from you, because the love and desire of peace is not confined to Quakerism, it is the *natural*, as well the religious wish of all denominations of men. And on this ground, as men labouring to establish an independent constitution of our own, do we exceed all others in our hope, end, and aim. *Our plan is peace for ever.* We are tired with contention with Britain, and can see no real end to it but in final a separation. We act consistently, because for the sake of introducing an endless and uninterrupted peace, do we bear the evils and burthens of the present day. We are endeavouring, and will steadily continue to endeavour, to separate and dissolve a connection which hath already filled our land with blood; and which, while the name of it remains, will be the fatal cause of future mischiefs to both countries.

We fight neither for revenge nor conquest; neither from pride nor passion: we are not insulting the world with our fleets and armies, nor ravaging the globe for plunder. Beneath the shade of our own vines are we attacked; in our own houses, and in our own land, is the violence committed against us. We view our enemies in the character of highwaymen and housebreakers, and having no defence for ourselves in the civil law, are obliged to punish them by the military one, and apply the sword, in the very case, where you have before now, applied the halter——Perhaps we feel for the ruined and insulted sufferers in all and every part of the continent, with a degree of tenderness which hath not yet made its way into some of your bosoms. But be ye sure that you mistake not the cause and ground of your testimony. Call not coldness of soul, religion; nor put the *Bigot* in the place of the *Christian*,

O ye partial ministers of your own acknowledged principles. If the bearing arms be sinful, the first going to war must be more so, by all the difference between wilful attack and unavoidable defence. Wherefore, if ye really preach from conscience, and mean not to make a political hobby-horse of your religion, convince the world thereof, by proclaiming your doctrine to our enemies, *for they likewise bear ARMS.* Give us proof of your sincerity by publishing it at St. James's, to the commanders in chief at Boston, to the admirals

mirals and captains who are piratically ravaging our coasts, and to all the murdering miscreants who are acting in authority under whom ye profess to serve. Had ye the honest soul of * *Barclay* you would preach repentance to *your* king ; Ye would tell the his sins, and warn him of eternal ruin. Ye would not spend your partial invectives against the injured and the insulted only, but, like faithful ministers, would cry aloud and *spare none*. Say not that ye are persecuted, neither endeavour to make us the authors of that reproach, which, ye are bringing upon yourselves ; for we testify unto all men, that we do not complain against you because ye are *Quakers*, but because you pretend to *be* and are NOT *Quakers*.

Alas ! it seems by the particular tendency of some part of your testimony, and other parts of your conduct, as if, all sin was reduced to, and comprehended in, ' *the act of bearing arms*, and that by the *people only*. Ye appear to us, to have mistaken party for conscience ; because, the general tenor of your actions wants uniformity : And it is exceedingly difficult to us to give credit to many of your pretended scruples ; because, we see them made by the same men, who, in the very instant that they are exclaiming against the mammon of this world, are nevertheless, hunting after it with a step as steady as time, and an appetite as keen as death.

The quotation which ye have made from Proverbs in the third page of your testimony, that, " when a man's ways

* " Thou hast tasted of prosperity and adversity ; thou knowest what
 " it is to be banished thy native country, to be over-ruled as well as to
 " rule, and set upon the throne ; and being *oppressed* thou hast reason to
 " know how *bateful* the *oppressor* is both to God and man : If after all
 " these warnings and advertisements, thou dost not turn unto the Lord
 " with all thy heart, but forget him who remembered thee in thy dis-
 " tress, and give up thyself to follow lust and vanity, surely great will
 " be thy condemnation.—Against which snare, as well as the temptation
 " of those who may or do feed thee, and prompt thee to evil, the most
 " excellent and prevalent remedy will be to apply thyself to that light
 " of Christ which shineth in thy conscience, and which neither can, nor
 " will flatter thee, nor suffer thee to be at ease in thy sins."

Barclay's Address to Charles II.

please

please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him ;" is very unwisely chosen on your part ; because, it amounts to a proof, that the (whom ye are so desirous of supporting) do *not* please the Lord, otherwise his reign would be in peace.

I now proceed to the latter part of your testimony, and that, for which all the foregoing seems only an introduction, viz.

" It hath ever been our judgment and principle, since we
 " were called to profess the light of Christ Jesus, manifested
 " in our consciences unto this day, that the setting up and
 " putting down kings and governments, is God's peculiar
 " prerogative, for causes best known to himself : And that
 " it is not our business to have any hand or contrivance
 " therein ; nor to be busy bodies above our station ; much
 " less to plot and contrive the ruin, or overturn of any of
 " them, but to pray for the king and safety of our nation,
 " and good of all men : That we may live a peaceable and
 " quiet life, in all godliness and honesty, *under the govern-*
 " *ment which God is pleased to set over us.*"——If these are
really your principles, why do ye not abide by them ? Why
 do ye not leave that, which ye call God's work, to be ma-
 naged by himself ? These very principles instruct you to
 wait with patience and humility, for the event of all public
 measures, and to receive *that event* as the divine will towards
 you. *Wherefore*, what occasion is there for your *political testi-*
mony if you fully believe what it contains ? And the very
 publishing it proves, that either ye do not believe what ye
 profess, or have not virtue enough to practise what ye be-
 lieve.

The principles of Quakerism have a direct tendency to
 make a man the quiet and inoffensive subject of any, and
 every government *which is set over him*. And if the setting
 up and putting down of kings and governments is God's pecu-
 liar prerogative, he most certainly will not be robbed thereof
 by us ; wherefore, the principle itself leads you to approve
 of every thing, which ever happened, or may happen to
 kings as being his work. OLIVER CROMWELL thanks you.
 CHARLES, then, died not by the hands of men ; and should
 the present proud imitator of him, come to the same un-
 timely end the writers and publishers of testimony are
 bound

bound, by the doctrine it contains, to applaud the fact. Kings are not taken away by miracles, neither are changes in governments brought about by any other means than such as are common and human ; and such as we are now using. Even the dispersion of the Jews, though foretold by our Saviour, was effected by arms. Wherefore, as ye refuse to be the means on one side, ye ought not to be meddlers on the other, but to wait the issue in silence ; and unless ye can produce divine authority, to prove that the Almighty, who hath created and placed this *new* world, at the greatest distance it could possibly stand, east and west, from every part of the old, doth, nevertheless, disapprove of its being independant of the corrupt and abandoned court of Britain ; unless I say ye can shew this, how can ye on the ground of your principles, justify the exciting and stirring up the people “ firmly to unite
 “ in the *abhorrence* of all such *writings*, and *measures*, as evi-
 “ dence a desire and design to break off the *happy* connection
 “ we have hitherto enjoyed with the kingdom of Great-Bri-
 “ tain, and our just and necessary subordination to the king,
 “ and to those who are lawfully placed in authority under him.”
 What a slap of the face is here ! the men, who in the very paragraph before, have quietly and passively resigned us the ordering, altering, and disposal of kings and governments, into the hands of God, are now, recalling their principles, and putting in for a share of the business. Is it possible, that the conclusion, which is here justly quoted, can any ways follow from the doctrine laid down ? The inconsistency is too glaring not to be seen ; the absurdity too great not to be laughed at ; and such as could only have been made by those, whose understandings were darkened by the narrow and crabby spirit of a despairing political party, for ye are not to be considered as the whole body of the Quakers, but only as an actional and fractional part thereof.

Here ends the examination of your testimony ; (which I call upon no man to abhor, as ye have done, but only to read and judge of fairly ;) to which I subjoin the following remark ; “ That the setting up and putting down of kings,” most certainly mean, the making him a king, who is yet not so, and the making him no king who is already one. And pray what hath this to do in the present case ? We neither mean *to set up* nor *to set down*, neither to *make* nor to *unmake*, but
 to

to have nothing to *do* with them. Wherefore, your testimony in whatever light it is viewed, serves only to dishonour your judgment, and for many other reasons had better have been let alone than published.

First; Because it tends to the decrease and reproach of all religion whatever, and is of the utmost danger to society, to make it a party in political disputes.

Secondly, Because it exhibits a body of men, numbers of whom disavow the publishing political testimonies, as being concerned therein, and approvers thereof.

Thirdly, Because it hath a tendency to undo that continental harmony and friendship which yourselves, by your late liberal and charitable donations, hath lent a hand to establish; and the preservation of which, is of the utmost consequence to us all.

And here, without anger or resentment, I bid you farewell, sincerely wishing, that as men and christians, ye may always fully and uninterruptedly enjoy every civil and religious right; and be in your turn, the means of securing it to others; but that the example which ye have unwisely set, of mingling religion with politics, *may be disavowed and reprobated by every inhabitant of AMERICA.*

F I N I S.

A D D I T I O N S
T O
C O M M O N S E N S E.

A M E R I C A N I N D E P E N D A N C Y
D E F E N D E D.

WHEN the little pamphlet intituled COMMON SENSE first made its appearance in favour of that so often abused idea of independance upon Great Britain, I was informed that no less than three gentlemen of respectable abilities were engaged to answer it. As yet I have seen nothing which directly pretends to dispute a single position of the author. The Solemn Testimony of the Quakers, however intended, having offered nothing to the purpose, I shall take leave to examine this important question, with all candour and attention, and submit the result to my much injured country.

Dependence of one man, or state upon another, is either absolute, or limited by some certain terms of agreement. The dependence of these colonies, which Great Britain calls *constitutional*, as declared by act of Parliament, is absolute. If the contrary of this be the bug-bear so many have been declaiming against, I could wish my countrymen would consider the consequence of so stupid a profession. If a limited dependence is intended, I would be much obliged to any one who will shew me the *Britanno-American Magna Charta*, wherein the terms of our limited dependence are precisely stated. If no such thing can be found, and *absolute* dependence be accounted inadmissible, the sound we are squabbling about has certainly no determinate meaning. If any say, we mean that kind of dependence we acknowledged at and before the year 1763; I answer, *vague and uncertain laws, and more especially CONSTITUTIONS*, are the very instruments of slavery. The Magna Charta

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Charter of England was very explicit, considering the time it was formed, and yet much blood was spilt in disputes concerning its meaning.

Besides the danger of an indefinite dependance upon an undetermined power, it might be worth while to consider what the characters are on whom we are so ready to acknowledge ourselves dependant. The votaries for this idol tell us, upon the good people of our mother country, whom they represent as the most just, humane, and affectionate friends we can have in the world. Were this true, it were some encouragement; but who can pretend ignorance that these just and humane friends are as much under the tyranny of men of a reverse character as we should be, could these miscreants gain their ends? I disclaim any more than a mutual dependance on any man, or number of men, upon earth; but an indefinite dependance upon a combination of men, who have, in the face of the sun, broken through the most solemn covenants, debauched the hereditary, and corrupted the elective guardians of the people's rights; who have, in fact, established an absolute tyranny in Great Britain and Ireland, and openly declared themselves *competent to bind the Colonists in all cases whatsoever*: I say, indefinite dependance on such a combination of *usurping innovators* is evidently as dangerous to liberty, as fatal to civil and social happiness, as any one step that could be proposed, even by the *destroyer of men*. The utmost that the honest party in Great Britain can do, is to warn us to avoid this dependance at all hazards! Does not even a Duke of Grafton declare the ministerial measures illegal and dangerous? And shall America, no way connected with this administration, press our submission to such measures, and reconciliation to the authors of them? Would not such pigeon-hearted wretches equally forward the recall of the Stuart family, and the establishment of Popery throughout Christendom, did they conceive the party in favour of those loyal measures the strongest? Shame on the men who can court exemption from present trouble and expence, at the price of their own and posterity's liberty! The honest party in England cannot wish for the reconciliation proposed. It is as unsafe to them as to us, and they thoroughly apprehend it. What check have they now upon the Crown, and what shadow of controul can they pretend, when the Crown can command fifteen or twenty millions a year, which they have nothing to say to? A proper proportion of our commerce

merce is all that can benefit any good man in Britain or Ireland; and God forbid we should be so cruel as to furnish bad men with power to enslave both Britain and America. Administration has now dissevered the dangerous tie : execrated will he be by the latest posterity who again joins the fatal cord ! But, say the puleing pusillanimous cowards, we shall be subject to a long and bloody war, if we declare independence. On the contrary, I affirm it the only step that can bring the contest to a speedy and happy issue. By declaring independence we place ourselves on a footing for an equal negociation : now we are called a pack of villainous rebels, who, like the St. Vincent Indians, can expect nothing more than a pardon for our lives, and the sovereign favour, respecting freedom and property, *to be at the King's will.* Grant, Almighty God, that I may be numbered with the dead before that fable day dawn on North America.

All Europe knows the illegal and inhuman treatment we have received from Britain. All Europe wishes the haughty empress of the main reduced to a more humble deportment. After herself has thrust her colonies from her, the maritime powers cannot be such ideots as to suffer her to reduce them to a more absolute obedience of her dictates than they were heretofore obliged to yield. Does not the most superficial politician know, that, while we profess ourselves the subjects of Great-Britain, and yet hold arms against her, they have a right to treat us as rebels, and that, according to the laws of nature and nations, no other state has a right to interfere in the dispute ? But on the other hand, on our declaration of independence, the maritime states at least, will find it their interest, which always secures the question of inclination, to protect a people who can be so advantageous to them. So that those short-sighted politicians, who conclude that this step will involve us in slaughter and devastation, may plainly perceive that no measure in our power will so naturally and effectually work our deliverance. The motion of a finger of the grand monarch would procure as gentle a temper in the omnipotent British minister, as appeared in the Manilla ransom, and Falkland-Islands affairs. From without, certainly, we have every thing to hope, nothing to fear from within ; some tell us the Presbyterians, if freed from the restraining power of Great-Britain, would overrun the peaceable Quakers in this government. For my own part, I despise and detest the bickerings of sectaries, and am ap-
pre-

prehensive of no trouble from that quarter, especially while no peculiar honours nor emoluments are annexed to either. I heartily wish too many of the Quakers did not give cause of complaint, by endeavouring to counteract the measures of their fellow citizens for the common safety. If they profess themselves only pilgrims here, let them walk through the men of this world without interfering with their actions on either side. If they would not *pull down kings*, let them not *support tyrants*; for, whether they understand it or not, there is, and ever has been, an essential difference in the characters.

Finally, with M. De. Vattel, I account *a state, a moral person having an interest and will of its own*, and I think that state a monster whose prime mover has an interest and will in direct opposition to its prosperity and security. This position has been so clearly demonstrated in the pamphlet first mentioned in this essay, that I shall only add, if there are any arguments in favour of returning to a state of dependance on Great Britain; that is, on the present administration of Great Britain; I could wish they were timely offered, that they may be soberly considered, before the cunning proposals of the cabinet, set all the timid, lazy, and irresolute members of the community into a clamour for *peace at any rate*.

CANDIDUS.

The **ANCIENT TESTIMONY** and **PRINCIPLES** of the People called **QUAKERS**, renewed, with respect to the **KING** and **GOVERNMENT**; and touching the **COMMOTIONS** now prevailing in these and other parts of **AMERICA**; addressed to the **PEOPLE** in **GENERAL**.

A Religious concern for our friends and fellow-subjects of every denomination, and more especially those of all ranks, who in the present commotions are engaged in public employments and stations, induces us earnestly to beseech every individual, in the most solemn manner, to consider the end and tendency of the measures they are promoting; and, on the most impartial enquiry into the state of their minds, carefully to examine whether they are acting in the fear of God, and in conformity to the precepts and doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we profess to believe in, and that by him alone we expect to be saved from our sins.

The calamities and afflictions that now surround us, should, as we apprehend, affect every mind with the most awful consideration of the dispensations of divine providence to mankind in general in former ages, and that, as the sins and iniquities of the people subjected them to grievous sufferings, the same causes still produce the same grievous effects.

The inhabitants of these provinces were long signally favoured with peace and plenty: Have the returns of true thankfulness been generally manifest? Have integrity and godly simplicity been maintained, and religiously regarded? Hath a religious care to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly, been evident? Hath the precept of Christ, to do unto others as we would they should do unto us, been the governing rule of our conduct? Hath an upright impartial desire to prevent the slavery and oppression of our fellow-men, and to restore them to their natural right, to true Christian liberty, been cherished and encouraged? Or have pride, wantonness, luxury, profaneness, a partial spirit, and forgetfulness of the goodness and mercies of God, become lamentably prevalent? Have we not, therefore, abundant occasion to break off from our sins by righteousness, and our iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; and, with true contrition, and abasement of soul,

to humble ourselves, and supplicate the almighty preserver of men, to shew favour, and to renew unto us a state of tranquillity and peace?

It is our fervent desire that this may soon appear to be the pious resolution of the people in general, of all ranks and denominations; then may we have a well-grounded hope, that wisdom from above, which is pure, peaceable, and full of mercy, and good fruits, will preside and govern in the deliberations of those, who, in these perilous times, undertake the transaction of the most important public affairs; and that by their steady cares and endeavours, constantly to act under the influences of this wisdom; those of inferior stations will be incited diligently to pursue those measures which make for peace, and tend to the reconciliation of contending parties, on principles dictated by the spirit of Christ, "who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke ix. 56.

We are so fully assured that these principles are the most certain and effectual means of preventing the extreme misery and desolations of wars and bloodshed, that we are constrained to intreat all who profess faith in Christ, to manifest that they really believe in him, and desire to obtain the blessings he pronounced to the makers of peace. Matt. v. 9.

His spirit ever leads to seek for and improve every opportunity of promoting peace and reconciliation, and constantly to remember, that, as we really confide in him, he can, in his own time, change the hearts of all men in such manner, that the way to obtain it hath been often opened contrary to every human prospect or expectation.

May we, therefore, heartily and sincerely unite in supplications to the father of mercies, to grant the plentiful effusions of his spirit to all, and in an especial manner to those in superior stations, that they may with sincerity guard against and reject all such measures and councils as may increase and perpetuate the discord, animosities, and unhappy contentions, which now sorrowfully abound.

We cannot but with distressed minds beseech all such, in the most solemn and awful manner, to consider that, if by their acting and persisting in a proud, selfish spirit, and not regarding the dictates of true wisdom, such measures are pursued as tend to the shedding of innocent blood; in the day when they and all men shall appear at the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive a reward according to their works, they will be excluded from
his

his favour, and their portion will be in everlasting misery. See Matt. xxv. 41. 2 Cor. v. 10.

The peculiar evidence of divine regard manifested to our ancestors, in the founding and settlement of these provinces, we have often commemorated, and desire ever to remember, with true thankfulness and reverent admiration.

When we consider—That at the time they were persecuted, and subjected to severe sufferings, as a people unworthy of the benefits of religious or civil society, the hearts of the king and rulers under whom they thus suffered were inclined to grant them these fruitful countries, and entrust them with charters of very extensive powers and privileges—That on their arrival here, the minds of the natives were inclined to receive them with great hospitality and friendship, and to cede to them the most valuable part of their land on very easy terms—That while the principles of justice and mercy continued to preside, they were preserved in tranquility and peace, free from the desolating calamities of war; and their endeavours were wonderfully blessed and prospered, so that the saying of the wisest of kings was signally verified to them, “when a man’s ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.” Prov. xvi. 7.

The benefits, advantages, and favour, we have experienced by our dependance on, and connection with, the kings and government under which we have enjoyed this happy state, appear to demand from us the greatest circumspection, care, and constant endeavours, to guard against every endeavour to alter or subvert that dependance and connection.

The scenes lately presented to our view, and the prospect before us, we are sensible, are very distressing and discouraging; and though we lament that such amicable measures as have been proposed, both here and in England, for the adjustment of the unhappy contests subsisting, have not been effectual; nevertheless, we should rejoice to observe the continuance of mutual peaceable endeavours for effecting a reconciliation; having grounds to hope that the divine favour and blessing will attend them.

“It hath ever been our judgment and principles since we were called to profess the light of Christ Jesus, manifested in our conscience, unto this day, that the setting up, and pulling down, kings and governments, is God’s peculiar prerogative, for

for causes best known to himself ; and that it is not our business to have any hand or contrivance therein, nor to be busy bodies above our station, much less to plot and contrive the ruin, or overturn any of them, but to pray for the king, and safety of our nation, and good of all men ; that we may live a peaceable and quiet life, in all godliness and honesty, under the government which God is pleased to set over us." *Ancient Testimony, 1696, in Sewell's History*

May we therefore firmly unite in the abhorrence of all such writings and measures as evidence a desire and design to break off the happy connection we have heretofore enjoyed with the kingdom of Great-Britain, and our just and necessary subordination to the king, and those who are lawfully placed in authority under him ; that thus the repeated solemn declarations, made on this subject, in the addresses sent to the king, on the behalf of the people of America in general, may be confirmed, and remain to be our firm and sincere intentions to observe and fulfil.

Signed in and on behalf of a meeting of the Representatives of our Religious Society, in *Pennsylvania* and *New-Jersey*, held at *Philadelphia*, the 20th day of the first month, 1776.

JOHN PEMBERTON, CLERK.

The PROPRIETY of INDEPENDANCY.

TO acknowledge that the Creator formed man for society, and that society cannot subsist without regulations, laws, and government ; and at the same time to assert, that in spite of all human care to prevent it, every government will degenerate into a tyranny, is such a daring *blasphemy* of the *divine attributes*, that had I not heard it asserted, and acquiesced in as a truth, I could not have believed such a position could have existed

existed in a civilized country! This monstrous hypothesis concludes, that notwithstanding the deity had power enough to form such admirable creatures as men and women, and fit them for enjoying of each other a thousand ways, and tho' by means of the most exquisite of those enjoyments a race should arise from them over which every power of rightful government must of necessity be exercised, yet just and rightful government is in reality Utopian, imaginary, and impracticable! Did not God cloath the grass, direct the wild goat, and provide for the sparrow, I might more easily be persuaded to suspect his care of man.

I readily grant, that the delegates of governmental power are too apt to consider themselves the possessors of it *in their own right*, and that that they therefore take every means in their power to become the *masters* in place of *servants* to their *constituents*; and that the people in all civilized countries have been too inattentive to the usurpations of their rulers: but I conceive of no cause in the nature of things which so absolutely counteracts the power of a wise, learned, and free community, as to render it impossible for them to preserve their liberty. The arguments brought from the condition of other states, are by no means conclusive with respect to the North American colonies. I am bold to assert, that such a favourable combination of circumstances as they are blessed with at this important conjuncture, never did take place among any people with whom history has made us acquainted. The most just and solid foundation of social happiness was laid in the first settlement of the continent, *the cultivation of the earth for the subsistence of its proprietor*. Here was no feudal tenure from some military lord; every cultivator being the lord of his own soil, and content with its produce, had no thoughts of encroaching upon, and subjecting his neighbour to his absolute dominion. Hence a handsome competency has enabled the bulk of the people to give their children such an education as enables them to read, and become acquainted with the usurpations of the deepest plotters of their ruin. The spirit of the people for obtaining this necessary information, is evident from the incredible number of news-papers, and other periodical publications which they encourage, and the effect of such institutions never have been so great in any community, yet known, as in these *pantaplebean* (*altogether commons*) colonies. How quickly the most important revolution

lution of the fundamentals of our policy can pervade a continent, may be guessed at by the progress of the idea of colonial independancy in three weeks or a month at farthest! Surely thousands and tens of thousands of common farmers and tradesmen must be better reasoners than some of our trammelled *juris consultors*, who to this hour feel a reluctance to part with the abominable chain, which remaining in any case whatever, though modified by all the wisdom and caution of the greatest men now living, must in a very little time drag the colonies into the most abject slavery. Many profess themselves zealous for the liberties of America, yet declare an abhorrence of the idea of independancy on Great Britain. If this be not a solecism, as absurd and irreconcilable as ever was obtruded on mankind, I know not the meaning of the term! *Civil liberty* never was defined in stricter terms than *an exemption from all controul, without the community, in which every qualified member has an equal voice*. No American, as such, has the shadow of incorporation with the government of Great Britain; and in consequence, if he receives the least syllable of law from that quarter, he gives up his claim to the definitive exemption. If the sticklers for *dependance* do not mean dependance for some certain laws, in the forming of which the colonists have no voice at all, I do not yet understand them; and if they do mean that we should admit the *claim* of any state, or any part of the power of any state, with which the democratic power of this state is not incorporated, to give us law *in any case whatever*, they admit a *fiore*, which I must make free to tell them, will speedily grow into an *iron sinew*, which neither themselves nor posterity will be able to endure or burst asunder. And further, it is not only the admission of some possible law from a foreign power, that hurries a people into slavery; a meer negative power on acts for the repeal of grievous laws will more slowly, but as certainly, subvert liberty.

Again, Mr Hume's observation, [*Perfect Commonwealth*, p. 301.] that, "The sword being in the hands of a single person, who will *always neglect to discipline the militia*, in order to have the pretext to *keep up a standing army*;" and the succeeding one, "that this is a *mortal distemper* in the *British* government, of which it *must, at last, inevitably perish*," now so fatally confirmed, may be a sufficient warning to the colonies

nies to *beware of being again entangled with the yoke of bondage.*

Many object to a republican government, as impracticable in a large state. "The contrary of this (says Hume) [*Per. Com.* 302.] seems evident. Though it is more difficult to form a republican government in an extensive country than in a city, there is more facility, when once it is formed, of preserving it steady and uniform, without tumult or faction, in the former than the latter. (*Per. Com.* 303.) In a large government, which is modelled with masterly skill, there is compass and room enough to define the democracy from the lower people, which may be admitted into the first elections, or first concoction of the commonwealth, to the higher magistrates who shall direct all the motions. At the same time the parts are so distant and remote, that it is very difficult, either by intrigue, prejudice, or passion, to hurry them into measures against the public interest." Thus far Mr Hume.

DEMOPHILUS.

A Review of the AMERICAN CONTEST.

NATURE instructs the brute creation to provide for, guard, and protect their offspring, until they are able to do for themselves. The dam is never known to forsake her young while her care is necessary for their safety, nor to do any thing which would involve them in distress and difficulty. Man, who has this principle in common with brutes, is endowed with others yet more valuable, but which to him are absolutely necessary, whereby he is taught to provide for the future welfare of his descendants, and to guard them from the encroachments of that power which civil society constitutes for its own safety; but which, through the depravity of human nature, is often turned against it. There are few parents who do not make it their constant study and earnest endeavour to leave some valuable inheritance to their children: few

few who have been so lost to the feelings of nature and calls of parental affection, as to entail difficulty and distress on their children, when it was in their power to leave them a fair and easy inheritance. And yet it has so happened, that by an ill-timed attachment to the present, without paying proper attention to the future, they have entailed misery upon them by the very means which were designed to preserve them from it.

It is now in your power to bequeath to your children the one or the other, and it becomes you to have an eye to them in all your proceedings. It is sufficiently known to you, that riches in arbitrary states are often the ruin of their possessors, and that security to property is absolutely necessary to stamp their true value on wealth and possessions. He, therefore, who wishes to leave his children in flourishing circumstances, ought to be a zealous friend to those measures, and that plan of government which gives the greatest security to property, and an active warm opposer of those which leave it to the arbitrary disposal of men, who find a greater advantage in making free with what does not belong to them, than in frugally using what is justly their own. Whig and Tory should be out of the question. Private pique, party faction, and animosity ought to subside. He who thinks should think for posterity, and he who acts should act for his children.

It is a great weakness to suffer our passions to take place of our reason, and blindly to follow their dictates, though to our manifest hurt, rather than subject them to our better sense. A false pride, which will not acknowledge an error, though ever so evident, an obstinate perseverance in our own opinion, without deigning to hear advice or instruction, and an unreasonable attachment to party, have done much mischief to mankind, and may yet do more, if not carefully avoided. I have directed this paper to you in preference to others, because your parental affection should form more than a counterpoise to every false principle, which can influence the human mind where the interest of your offspring is at stake.

Our present contest is immensely great, and every man must see that it will affect posterity. Its consequences cannot end with itself; but the latest generations must feel its effects. The greater ruler of the universe has permitted it for wise purposes, and has called every one of us to act our part in it. It becomes us, therefore, laying aside all former prejudices, partiality,

tiality and party attachments, to act upon principles which will justify us to him who has assigned us our stations, and cause posterity to bless the memory of their forefathers. We all agree in this, that Great Britain is unjust and arbitrary, and we have hitherto principally differed in the mode of opposition, which ought to have been pursued. I speak not to those who think one way and talk another. They act upon such base principles, that it is in vain to attempt to rouse in them any just or generous sentiments. We have no instance of the conversion of avaricious or ambitious hypocrites, and it would be wasting time to use arguments to convince them. I direct myself to you who have sincerity sufficient to examine the principles on which you proceed, and honesty enough to pursue that course of conduct which appears to be right, and so much affection for your children, as to prefer their interest and happiness to every other consideration. For you I mean to throw together a few hints, which may assist you in finally fixing a right choice.

The British administration began its attacks on our liberties with a Stamp Act, but meeting with strong opposition they thought fit to repeal it. This act threw the colonies into strong convulsions, and we rejoiced exceedingly on its repeal, and fondly hoped, that we should enjoy future tranquillity. But we were mistaken. They never intended to relinquish the design, but only to change their ground, that which they first pitched upon being untenable. An American revenue granted by a British parliament was the object, and they never lost sight of it; for they soon renewed their attacks upon principles which they thought more favourable to their intentions; but meeting with as little success in that, as in the preceding attempt, they suspended their measures for a time, in hopes of lulling us into a careless security. They accordingly once more returned to the charge, and endeavoured to effect by cunning and artifice, what they had heretofore attempted in vain on every other peaceable plan. This not succeeding, they were reduced to their last shift of bullying and force; and this they resolved upon. They levied armies, appointed generals of reputation to command, and sent them among us, we may know their commission by their conduct; for after abusing, brow-beating and insulting, after starving and tarring and feathering, after offering every possible injury which a free people could bear, without obtaining their ends, and every other measure failing, they drew the sword, and at once reduced us

to the dire alternative of submitting to their illegal claims of jurisdiction, or entering into the bloody contest. Like men determined to be free, we chose the latter. It now rests on the last argument, which finally settles all controversies of a like nature. The plan of operation is now opened, and they who stand to it with the most steady perseverance must finally succeed. This is the decree of Providence in all cases, "he that persevereth unto the end shall be saved." We have, by the blessing of God, effectually baffled all their former attempts; but if we fail in this, all our former victories will only serve to make our fall the more conspicuous and terrible.

I will not enquire what would have been the efficacy of any heretofore recommended, but untried means. The worst that can has happened, and it is with it we have now to deal; to relinquish it on our part, would be to give up the matter, for however any means might once have done, cowardice alone would now desert the field, and slavery must be the inevitable consequence.

I do not wonder that war sits heavy on us, and that we are somewhat restless and uneasy; but I shall be surprised, if we who have so long and so successively opposed tyranny and oppression, should all on a sudden lose every desire of retaining our liberties. I am forced into this remark by the artful, cunning and designing manner in which some men talk of a reconciliation with Great Britain, and the bug-bears they conjure up to frighten the timid, irresolute and ignorant, from a steady prosecution of those means, which alone can help us in our present circumstances. Facts bear evidence from the beginning of the contest, that every scheme they ever recommended has, upon trial, proved inadequate to the end for which it was intended; yet they proceed. Beware of such men, they love neither their country nor their liberties, so much as something else.

There are many, I doubt not, who are denominated Tories by the more zealous Whigs, who, in their hearts, wish success to our measures, though they may be chagrined because those they proposed did not go down with the people; these are uniform, open, and not very dangerous; but there are others, who, under the cloak of friendship for the cause, harbour the bitterest rancour and malice in their hearts. These talk favourably in general, though their discourses mostly terminate with a *doubt, suspicion, or but*, which give those with whom

whom they converse, reason to dread some hidden design, or approaching evil, which most men have not properly attended to. They artfully recall your attention to a certain period, when all was peace and quietness, and by pathetically lamenting the unhappy alteration, endeavour to impress your minds with an opinion, that all our troubles arose from ourselves. They carefully avoid mentioning the iniquitous measures of the British government which produced them, and by keeping those out of sight, they gradually lead the unwary into the belief, that the men who have been most active on the present occasion in opposing the tyrannical proceedings of Great Britain, and who have hazarded their all in defence of their country, have been actuated by sinister motives in all they have done. If every man who hears such insinuations was to ask those who cast them out, what measures have not the men they condemn tried at one time or another to avoid the present contest, and save our liberties? What advantages can they reap by a successful end of it, which every other freeman on the continent will not reap equally with them? And in an unsuccessful close of it, all will allow they must be the greatest sufferers. Their lives must go, let who will else escape. These questions might recall them to facts, and these facts would enable men to judge aright.

Honesty could not stand the force of a few pertinent questions, but these men have taken their leave of it, and, like Manasseh of old, have sold themselves to do wickedly. Were it not so, could it be possible for them in the face of the sun, to charge all our troubles on the New England Presbyterians, troubles which originally begun and have all along been kept up by a wicked administration and a venal parliament. To make them the hatchers of mischiefs occasioned by unconstitutional acts of parliaments, and the only fomenters of our just opposition, which a Pennsylvanian Quaker, a Maryland and a Virginian churchmen, did more to effect than all the other men on the continent put together, is cruelty in the extreme. My heart bleeds when I think of such men; who would sell the whole continent, and all the blood in it, for private advantage, and with whom a few thousand guineas, with a title, would be esteemed an equivalent for the lives, liberty and property of the freemen of a colony. May that God, who sees how little they can gain, if successful, open their eyes and turn their hearts, e'er they be convinced by fatal experience, that
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he who purchases the whole wore at the price of his soul, is a very unwise dealer, and makes but a poor bargain in the end. If the calls of virtue, the precepts of religion, and dictates of patriotism, cannot awaken them to a sense of their duty, yet Norfolk might open their eyes. But let them do as they please, we ought to act wisely. If we do not make such a settlement now as will secure the privilege we contend for to posterity, we entail either slavery or a civil war on our children. This is certain, let what will be doubtful. Look round you then, view your offspring, and tell me, are you willing to leave them such a legacy? Do not trifle on this occasion, all your other legacies must derive their true value from the part you now take in this contest. Think not that God who charges him with worse than infidelity who provides not for his own, and those of his household, will justify you in returning to the state you were in when your troubles began, and thereby delivering over your offspring to the mischievous machinations of a power that from the beginning has set right, justice, and mercy at defiance, and in all her deliberations considered nothing but her ability to execute.

Look to the year 1763, that happy period, as many so fondly call it, and see what safety there is to America in such a situation. Lord North has said, "if that is all they want, we are agreed;" and the saying pleases many of you. His Lordship, like others, who have learned wisdom by experience, wishes to have all to begin again, believing that he could more easily effect his purpose by other means than those he is at present pursuing. Swallow the bait, and you are undone for ever.

Can any man in his senses believe, that he who has so long, and so invariably pursued his point against the sense of the best men in the nation, will finally desert his master's most favourite scheme so easily? Has he uttered a single syllable that can make the most credulous believe, that he is convinced of the injustice of his conduct? He confesses he was deceived; but wherein lay the deception? In believing that fewer troops would effect a submission than he is now convinced must be employed. Here lay the deception he complained of; and he is therefore determined to send his terms with such an armed force, as he expects will frighten you into a compliance. Does this look like the conduct of one who designs to relinquish his claims? Were he sensible of the injustice of his proceedings,
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and the wrongs he has done us, he would speak a very different language. Why does he call you rebels? Why call in foreign troops? Why lament so pathetically, that the extensive operations of the war he means to carry on against you, will exhaust his funds and increase the public debts, while he has not a single tear to shed, not a groan, nor as much as a sigh, for all the blood already spilt, and yet to spill? O—if thy ministers intentions are not evil against us, why not hearken to the repeated prayers of thy distressed subjects in America? Why not recall thy troops, repeal the acts, indemnify us for what we have suffered, and offer any further security to our rights? Thou hast an obedient parliament, which disputes not thy will; and all this is in thy power, and in no one's else. Had the king made a speech to the house, recommending those things, he would have given an unequivocal proof of his honest intentions, and it might justly be termed gracious. But who can trust a —, who, while he speaks the language of peace and humanity with his lips, has nothing but cruelty and war in his conduct. The man who does may have the innocence of the dove, but he cannot be possessed of the wisdom of the serpent.

A Friend to Posterity and Mankind.

*To the Right Honourable Lord DARTMOUTH, Secretary
of State for AMERICA.**

Philadelphia, Jan. 1, 1776.

My Lord,

YOU are the minister of the American department. You have the character of a religious man, a rare virtue in a modern statesman. It has become my duty and interest to address you, on the present circumstances of affairs in America.

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rica.

* When this paper was written and published, the Americans were not acquainted that his lordship had retired to another department in the state.

rica. I know the Americans well ; their strongest and ruling passion was their affection to their mother country ; the honour, the glory of Great Britain, they esteemed as their greatest happiness ; a large portion of the same affection remains ; nothing but repeated injuries and injustice could have lessened it. My Lord, from a wanton and avaricious exercise of power, the ministry of Great Britain have heaped injuries on the heads of the Americans, that no one period of history can parallel.

The practice of the Egyptians in smothering the children of the Israelites in the birth, the swords of Cortez and Pizarro, who slew millions of innocent Mexicans and Peruvians, the dreadful famine brought by the East India company upon the poor East Indians, must all be brought into one scale, to serve as any sort of balance to the system of desolation, that you and your brother ministers are meditating and daily practising against the unhappy people of North America.

The elements, which the providence of God hath given for all his creatures, you have the presumption to deprive them of. Fire, sword, famine, and desolation, shew the vicinity of your fleets and armies ; children and servants are animated to rise and slaughter their benefactors. No species of cruelty, which the wit or malice of man or devils could devise, but are practised against the Americans.

Do you believe in God, my Lord, and direct these things ? Do you believe that God made America as well as Great Britain ? If you do, ponder, consider well, what answer will you give if you escape punishment in this world, when you come to be questioned before the throne of God, for the destruction you have made of his creatures, the work of his hands, to whom he granted life and liberty, earth, air, and water, equally as to yourself, and yet, presumptuous man, you have dared to counteract his providence ! Have you conscience, my Lord ? If you have, I would not, for the empire of a thousand worlds, be Lord Dartmouth. But, my Lord, it is not to awaken your conscience that I write you this letter : the flame of civil war, by your management, hath extended far and wide in America ; battles have been fought, numbers have been slain, and prisoners taken on both sides ; the Americans have in their possession ten for one, and among them many men of rank, Prescott, Preston, Stopford, and others ; they are all treated with tenderness and regard, while the prisoners

soners you have taken are treated with severity, carried into England in irons, there, as it is said, to be tried, and of course condemned and executed, or in other words, under form of law, murdered.

My Lord, if there be any thing on earth or in heaven that you respect, avoid that rock.—You have Colonel Allen, Capt. Martindale, and some other prisoners—the hour that it is known here that any of those prisoners are executed, the prisoners here will be sacrificed—nay more, every English and Scots adherent;—dread, shun, and for ever abandon such murderous intentions.—The cries and vengeance of all the relations of those whose blood shall be shed in this manner will surround you, death and horror will be your constant companions, and the torments of the damned, even on earth, will await you.—

My Lord, this is but the beginning of sorrows. Take in good part what I write. It is truth, and intended for the benefit of Britain and America.

An ENGLISH AMERICAN.

Observations on Lord NORTH's Conciliatory PLAN.

I Cannot recal an idea to my mind more amazingly absurd and stupid than the idea of Lord North's second attempt to lull the colonists into a belief of his inclination to hold out to them terms of a safe and amicable reconciliation with Great Britain. No one is ignorant, that the Americans have offered every thing that can possibly be devised to bury the injuries and enslaving claim of administration, in perpetual oblivion, and leave matters on the same footing they were before the pretence was held up. Those generous proposals, however often repeated, have as often been rejected with an insolent contempt, and yet the *profound politician* tells his opponents in the British house of commons, that he is heartily inclined to a reconciliation with the colonies, and willing to put them

them in the situation they so passionately desire ; that is, says he, to a courtier demanding explanation, *in a state of absolute dependance on the British parliament in all cases whatsoever* ; for, says his lordship, they were unquestionably thus dependant in 1763. Had his lordship entirely forgot the success of his former experiment, perhaps a trial of the same wretched *trick* over again, might have appeared less ridiculous. I may indeed, say, lets insulting to the lowest understanding. I would ask the most credulous votary for making up the dispute, what *possible grounds* she perceives to found his expectation of a permanent reconciliation upon ? Has any thing lately happened, which has indicated a change of disposition in the prince or his favourites ? Can a majority, which have been secured from one seven years to another, by pure force of corruption, be depended on to remain firm to a slaughtering, plundering, and desolating court, and share the detestation of present and future ages, for mere nothing ? Has the court resolved to cast Bernard, Hutchinson, Richardson, Malcolm, and Richardson the recent volunteer, out on the common ? I tell you, nay ! You have a fresh instance of the firmness of the cabinet, in adding another three thousand pound pension to the list, in a conjuncture, when all mankind will confess there is need of saving. These burthensome pensions must come from some part of the dominions ! If Great Britain and Ireland have conceived such a mortal hatred to America, that they can hug her most inveterate enemies in their bosoms, and vote them such munificent rewards for drawing her into so destructive a civil war, we cannot be safe in the power of such enemies. If they abound in resources as largely as Mr Wedderburne and others boast they do, let them cease complaining of their poverty, and contentedly discharge their own national debt, rather than go on augmenting ; or by their efforts to saddle it, with an unlimited pension-list, on America. Does the nation bear the weight of the present unnatural quarrel with America on other terms, than a firm assurance of the court, that millions of leading men's dependants shall be provided for in America, for whom places can by no means be found at home ? Is not the very genius of the people of Great Britain and Ireland corrupted, insomuch, that the views of young fellows of education, or any connection with men of note, are altogether set on public money ? Can our peaceable men indulge a gleam of hope, that this humour will alter, or that youths, bred in

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idleness and dissipation, will become industrious and disinterested patriots? If they can, they must then be so weak as to conceit, that ministers will become less fond of fingering the public money, and securing themselves in places of power and profit by means of it; indeed, that they will be become more honest and saving of the national money than those the constitution has appointed as a check upon them. It is no wonder they talk of sending a formidable fleet and army to bring over their terms of reconciliation, when they are in no one article different from the terms they first aimed to impose. Had the minister the remotest idea of favouring us with a government of laws, which had any respect to the security of our lives and properties, he had long since granted it with a good grace to petitions, made and repeated with the most dutiful persevering affection, which asked for nothing more! *Sed aut Cæsar aut nullus*, seems the unalterable determination of the man, who soothed our already elated expectations, by an inaugural declaration, that he *gloried* in the name of Briton, at that time, a distinctive characteristic of the patrons of universal liberty. If therefore the whole body of the governing, and influential part of the governed in Great Britain, be unalterably set upon extorting tribute from the colonies; and the better to secure the collection of it, claim right to impose the laws, and executors of those laws, dependant only on themselves for appointment, continuance and support; and all these to be extended at their sole pleasure; it may readily be determined on what condition the absolutely passive subjects of such an unnatural usurpation would quickly be. It is evident they have concluded on two things, viz. to make a bold push for our entire subjection, as their ends would be thereby more readily answered; but that being found impracticable, we are to be tried with negotiation, in which all the craft, duplicity and panic faith of administration is to be expected. Pray God it may be wisely and firmly guarded against! The worthy and honourable John Collins, Esq; of Newport, Rhode Island, on the arrival of Lord North's last conciliatory plan, observed, that notwithstanding the exposure of his large estate, to whatever depredations the enemy saw fit to make upon it, he was more concerned for the probable success of their arts than arms. Had the Americans in general the wisdom and firmness of that gentleman, matters would never have come to the present melancholy lengths we find them. How-

ever, in the great and general plan of him who putteth down and setteth up states, this is doubtless an indispensable part, and therefore not to be complained of; but it has amazed me to contemplate the numerous instances of disappointment our enemies have met with, in every plot they have laid for our destruction. How did Bernard and Hutchinson flatter themselves with the number of friends they had in several towns of the Massachusetts's, and thought that a very trifling force, from the other side of the water, added to their minions, dependants and expectants, would crush a little turbulent faction, who disturbed their darling measures? Certainly men, intoxicated with a lust of absolute power, found something in the appearance of things to tell them on to an object so grateful to their fondest wishes; otherwise they would have been contented to augment and confirm their power by such unperceived degrees, that the *happy days*, many tell us, we have enjoyed under a continually invading usurpation, would not yet have been so sensibly interrupted. No less has the so often extolled governor Tryon been disappointed in his benevolent intentions respecting New York. His band on Long Island, and on the east side of Hudson's River, with Sir John Johnson among his vassals, and the Indians, gave him great hopes of having matters in a fine train before the invincible armada in the spring; instead of which, it is probable the active General Lee will so fortify that place, that all the force they can send against it, will be insufficient to reduce it. Dunmore, with all his wanton ravage, has done little more than exasperate the Virginians, and convinced that brave colony, that they can be formidable to savages on the east, as well as west side of their dominion. Carleton's Canadians make no such figure in the harangues of the pensioner, as they did last year; and in case foreigners are to be procured to be poured in upon us, the greatest opposers of our total separation from Britain acknowledge, they would then no longer defer a declaration of independency, and application to other powers for their protection. To this the whole scene appears rapidly advancing, in my view, as hastily as infinite wisdom thinks proper to conduct it; and if this be his most gracious design, he will work, and none shall hinder. Amen, beneficent Jehovah! Amen. *Sic sperat.*

SINCERUS,

On sending COMMISSIONERS to treat with the CONGRESS.

THE man who would penetrate all the designs, and thoroughly acquaint himself with the several manœuvres, of the British government, ought carefully to attend to two subjects, viz. The prime minister is always considered as the central wheel of all government movements, and the eyes of every one are fixed upon him, and his motions alone attended to. But in the present case, where he is confessedly ostensible, the affair is quite otherwise? and he who wishes to distinguish between the measures which proceed from the real minister, and will be prosecuted, and those which the ostensible is directed to hold out, as barrels to a whale, may, perhaps, find the true clue to guide through the labyrinth in the following observations.

Great Britain has steadily and invariably pursued one course of conduct towards these colonies for the last 12 years, and yet politicians have constantly charged her with fickleness and a want of a regular plan. He who discerns the true cause of this inconsistent consistency, can point out its nature, end, and use, and shew that this fickleness demonstrates the firmest steadfastness, sees into the bottom of the present British policy, and comprehends all her measures. This knowledge I wish every member of the honourable Continental Congress possessed of, with virtue and spirit sufficient to withstand all their efforts to destroy our liberties.

As soon as the parliament is called, the King gives certain intimations of his designs, and applies for the approbation and support of the Commons. Here we have a small opening of the designs of the Cabinet, no more being communicated than is absolutely necessary for obtaining a general concurrence and vote of aids from parliament. This being once obtained by way of address, a new plan opens, and that spirit, which was roused by this discovery of the real designs of the government, is laid asleep as quickly as possible, and the real minister now retiring behind the curtain, the ostensible one succeeds to his place. You may therefore observe, that, as soon as the hands of the secret cabinet are let loose by loyal addresses, things take a new turn in parliament immediately; and the prime minister, as if totally forsaking the high ground he had lately taken possession of, begins to open new plans of a very different
nature

nature from that held out in the speech from the throne, and recommended in the addresses of both Houses of Parliament. The cabal go to work with all the secrecy and vigour they are masters of, and Lord North assumes his new character, which is that of the deceiver of America, and amuser of the nation. And he has hitherto played his part so well, that all has gone on to their mind. He last year rendered them invisible even to their own party, and had like to lose all by it; so that he was forced to take off the mask, and partly discover himself, before he could carry matters in the House. Any one who remembers his motion will feel the force of what is here related; and he who recollects that said motion arrived but a few weeks before the order for seizing Messrs. Hancock and Adams, which opened the present scene of the war, must perceive he acted in the capacity I have assigned him. Even they who entertain the most indifferent opinion of the administration, were, by this motion, induced to believe, for a time, that they meant to give up the matter.

He is now playing the same game over again. Proposals for a reconciliation, commissioners, and what not, are now held out as the motion was last year, and for the same purposes.

The two parties now divide, each going to his own proper business:—the secret cabinet, to arraying the greatest military force they can muster, and dispatching them to butcher us with the utmost expedition; Lord North, and the Parliament, to amuse the nation, and distract and divide the colonies by every hypocritical art in their power. Thus the two plans go hand in hand; the one to divide, the other to conquer. Was it not precisely so last year? Is it not so now? All ye timid, irresolute, terrified, and double-faced Whigs, who have, by one means or other, crept into authority, open your mouths wide, and bawl stoutly against every vigorous measure until the commissioners arrive. They will bring pockets well lined with English guineas; patents for places, pensions, and titles, in abundance, will attend them. Your palms will be first greased. You are the only men who can compleat the parliamentary plans for raising an American revenue! COMMON SENSE says this winter is worth an age; rejoice that it is now past; do all in your power to pass the spring in inactivity, and matters may yet go to your minds. Lord North's motion last winter did much for you; the commissioners, equally improv-

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ed; will probably crown your wishes. I shall thank God, and heartily rejoice, if your influence reach not the councils and proceedings of the congress.

Depend upon it, my countrymen, "*divide & impera*" is the instruction of every commissioner; and his orders will be delayed, that he may divide and distract as much as possible, until the forces are all arrived, and they be in a condition to enforce their plan; then they will inform you, ~~they~~ have received orders, by which they are commanded to break off the treaty.

Too many have already lost sight of our real enemies, and are so fascinated with the prospect of commissioners, that I begin to dread the snare, and cannot help crying out to you, Oh, foolish Americans! Who has bewitched you, that you should put any confidence in men who spill your blood with as little ceremony and reluctance as a butcher would that of an ox! Is this all you know of ministers?

I know there is not a Tory now on the continent but hopes these commissioners will effect their purpose, and are preparing to give them every possible assistance, and very few Whigs who have not their fears on the occasion. Every thinking man on both sides of the question must, and does believe, that their sole errand is to cajole and deceive; and that large promises, lies, bribery, and corruption, are the means they will use.

I beseech you to lend all your spirit and vigour to the congress on the occasion. Depend on it, they will want it. Pray them to take one decisive step—to send orders to the Commander in Chief in each province to arrest said commissioners, in the name of the Thirteen United Colonies, as soon as they set foot on shore, and send them, under strong guards, to the Congress, with the strictest injunctions that they be permitted to speak with no man, besides the guards and their servants, until they arrive at Philadelphia; and that, as soon as they arrive, a deputation from Congress to wait upon them, and ask them this one plain question,—Have you authority to order home your fleets and armies immediately? If they answer in the negative, then to break off all farther conference, and send them off that instant to the enemy's head-quarters; with this information, that we scorn as much to treat with a dagger at our breasts, as we disregard their forces. If they answer in the affirmative, then to assure them, that, as soon as the intelligence

telligence of their fleets and armies arrival in Great Britain shall have reached America, the conference shall be opened, and not before:—that they, in the mean time, shall be kept in safe custody, treated like gentlemen, but not permitted to correspond or converse with the inhabitants before the treaty is completed. Every hour spent in conference with commissioners before this takes place, is an hour lost to America, and two gained to Great Britain, besides the immense damages which will arise from the powers of deceit and corruption: English gold, government promises, pensions, titles, and every art which malice, cunning, and religious hypocrisy can invent or use, will be played off against our liberties. These, judiciously applied, will convert such among the great as have not virtue and integrity to withstand their force; and you will be sold, without pocketing a penny of the price. Without pocketing, did I say? Nay, yourselves must pay it. Hard lot indeed! But if you have not virtue and spirit sufficient to support the Congress in executing these measures for your security, you deserve it. I conclude by exhorting you to keep on the watch; lose not sight of the army by looking at the prime minister, parliament, and commissioners. One bold stroke will effectually defeat the machinations of the latter, and then the former will stand alone and unsupported, and a second vigorous exertion will crush their evil designs against your liberties. Remember these commissioners are the wooden horse which is to take those by stratagem whom twelve years hostility could not reduce. Act then like Laocoon; strike the dagger into his breast, and never permit your credulity or inactivity to give the perjured Sinon an opportunity of making a worn-out, deluded or corrupted Whig, the altar on which to offer up your dear-bought privileges.

CASSANDRA.

P. S. I shall be told, this would be treating the commissioners too cavalierly. To this I answer, men coming on such an errand cannot be treated too much so. Let any one shew the least mark of a design in administration to relinquish their claims, and I will treat them with the utmost ceremony and respect. I will publish an *ancient testimony* in their own favour, if it can be but considered as doing them honour. For though, I trust, I shall never prostitute a pure and holy religion to pay my court to men, though they be kings, yet I will do any right thing for those who come on so good an errand.

QUEST

QUESTIONS and ANSWERS.

IS the stoppage of our exports to Great Britain, and its dependencies, a political measure ?

They who assert that the measure is impolitic, argue thus—It is the interest of every country to export its produce, and to import as little as possible of the luxuries and manufactures of other countries ; the former enriches, the latter impoverishes the inhabitants of a country thus exporting and importing ; abstain, say they, from the vanities and luxuries with which England used to supply us, and draw the cash of England by continuing to carry out the product of our labour and industry.——

This is specious, not solid reasoning. The exports from this continent to Great Britain consist chiefly of rough materials, or of such luxuries, which by being reshipped from the ports of Great Britain enable its merchants to traffic with foreign nations to greater advantage, and to pay a balance by an exchange of commodities, that must otherwise be discharged in bullion. A stoppage of our exports must therefore very sensibly affect the trade of Great Britain to the rest of Europe ; and we have reason to conclude, that if such stoppage should subsist for any length of time, the European trade, which England now drives on, would be so much impaired as to put the balance against her with every European nation. It is therefore good policy to withhold our exports from Great-Britain, Ireland, and the British West-India islands.

But under a total stoppage of our trade, is it possible to support this civil war for any length of time, for three or four years for instance ?

It is very difficult to determine what enthusiasm, indignation, and the love of ones country, may not accomplish. We have read of nations stimulated by those passions, though destitute of foreign and internal resources, having made incredible efforts to preserve their freedom ; witness the Saguntines, and the Carthaginians in the last punic war. It may be doubted whether these colonies, if thus reduced, would imitate so glorious an example. Carthage and Saguntum were single cities ; their destruction was irrevocably fixed, and death or slavery, the only choice of citizens resolved to die, or remain free ; an im-
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placeable enemy surrounded their walls; on common fate, mutual sufferings, and indignation, inspired them with a courage heightened by despair, which the perseverance and conduct of Hannibal, and Roman valor, could scarce surmount. The instances are not similar, why then expect similar efforts?—Without trade there seem to be but two ways to support the war; emitting paper money, and borrowing on interest part of that money so emitted; for once destroy the credit of your currency, and you render it mere waste paper; its value depends upon its credit, and its credit on the opinion which people at large entertain of our ability to exchange it hereafter for gold and silver; suppose, for instance, the continent should emit 100 millions, who could seriously imagine such a sum would ever be paid off in gold and silver? it follows then of course, that we are limited in our emissions, because our faculties to redeem those emissions are limited.

To what amount may we emit?

No man, perhaps, can solve this question; the person who should even presume to guess, must have a thorough knowledge of these colonies, he must be well acquainted with the number of their people, their inclinations, arts, and industry, the product of our soil, its capability of improvement, the fisheries, trade, and manufactories, which may be established, and successfully carried on. The extent of these emissions will depend too, in a great degree, on the events of the war; a merchant who prospers in trade may obtain credit to almost any amount; his credit may exceed by several hundred thousands his real capital.

Suppose six millions currency emitted; what part of this emission might be borrowed on interest, and on what interest?

Where the risk is great the interest must be high; where the circumstances of the borrower are conceived to be desperate, he will not be able to borrow, or must give an extravagant premium. The possibility then of borrowing, and the rate of interest, will depend on our good or bad success.—If six millions were to be emitted, and our affair should prosper, perhaps 2,500,000 might be borrowed by the Congress at six per cent. interest.—That sum would but barely answer the charge of one campaign; of future expences, however, a good judgement may be formed from the past. It certainly will not be

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good policy to rely altogether on the above ways and means of raising money to carry on the war ; they will only be found to answer in case of success. If we should have no other resources the knowledge of this very circumstance may encourage our enemy to protract the war. The quit-rents heretofore paid to the crown may be applied to the public use ; but besides the inability of the people to pay these quit-rents, when deprived of the means of payment, they will go but a little way towards the support of the war.

How long is it expected that these colonies can sit easy under a total stagnation of external commerce, and the almost entire stoppage of the courts of justice ?

This situation is surely too constrained to admit of any considerable duration ; the feelings of our people and our exigencies point out the necessity of opening a trade to foreign nations. To protect our trade a marine is wanting ; to form one during this war, adequate to the purpose, seems impracticable. We must make it the interest of foreigners to take this burthen on themselves ; a declaration of independance might possibly tempt France and Spain to run the risk of a war with England, provided those powers could be assured of our remaining independant ; they would, no doubt, be willing to guaranty our independance, but they may apprehend, and not without good grounds, that their taking a too early part with us in the war would induce Great Britain to make peace with the colonies. It may therefore be the policy of France and Spain not to appear forward and desirous of intermeddling ; to suffer the war to continue, that the contending parties, exasperated by mutual injuries, may not again coalesce ; secretly to countenance their subjects commerce with these colonies, and perhaps to assist them with money, arms, and ammunition. Should the British government direct the war to be prosecuted in the manner it has been, and should every colony in turn experience such horrid ravages, the resentment and indignation thereby may totally alienate the minds of the colonists, and wean them from that affection, which heretofore bound them to Great Britain ; the force of habit will wear off ; the remembrance of past benefits will be obliterated by recent wrongs, and the sweets of independance once enjoyed will effectually preclude a subsequent dependance on Great Britain.

Will

Will not the mischiefs of independance overbalance the benefits?

To determine this question both must be stated; and dispassionately considered, to form a true judgment. The evils apprehended from independance may be reduced to these three; civil dissensions; the establishment of tyranny, as a certain consequence; and the great expence of fleets and armies to maintain that independance. As a foederal union of these colonies will probably ensue, should they separate from Great Britain, it may be presumed, that the utmost precaution will be used in drawing the articles of the union; and in the formation and settlement of this new government, every security which human foresight can suggest will be taken for the preservation of the liberties, privileges, and independency of each colony, and the protection of all. Dissensions can spring only from the ambition of the more powerful colonies, or from the contrariety of interests. What probability is there that two or three colonies will unite to subdue the rest? Is it not more probable, should any colony or colonies break the union, and form the ambitious project of conquering the others, that these will immediately unite against the infringers of the public faith? Foreign assistance would not be wanting to support the weaker confederacy, and this consideration alone would deter the stronger from the attempt.

If ambition should not occasion a civil war, a difference of interests and religion may; the interests of these colonies are as different as their religious tenets.

This has often been said, but remains to be proved. Some disputes may arise concerning trade, duties, customs, and impositions on merchandize, or about the limits and boundaries of contiguous provinces; these disputes must be adjusted and finally settled by the Great Council, or States General of the United Colonies. Such partial controversies will, for many years at least, give way to the public safety, which would be endangered by suffering them to grow to too great a pitch; the common enemy might take the advantage of such civil discord, and reduce all the colonies under one yoke. In this tolerating age we have no great cause to apprehend a religious war; the spirit of religious persecution is wearing off in all the civilized nations in Europe, and will still decrease as they become more enlightened and refined. Can we then rationally suppose,
that

that these colonies, hitherto eminently distinguished for toleration, and whose union will be founded on that humane and politic principle, will, from a frantic zeal for religion, plunge themselves into the complicated miseries of a civil and religious war? If neither the ambition of some colonies, nor the difference of interests, nor religious rancour, are likely to produce a civil war, it follows of course, that the establishment of tyranny (the second evil) is extremely improbable and remote.

But, to preserve our independance, will not a strong fleet and army be necessary? Neither can be supported without a great expence, and standing armies are dangerous to liberty, besides, being burthensome to those who pay them.

When these colonies enjoy an unfettered trade, the profits of them will enable them to equip and maintain a naval force sufficient to guard their coasts and commerce, and this fleet will render a standing army unnecessary; a well regulated militia will answer all the purposes of self-defence, and of a wise and just government; the expence therefore of a regular standing army may be saved, without exposing ourselves to danger from a foreign enemy, and the militia will be able to suppress any internal commotions excited by factious and discontented men.

What will be the probable benefits of independance?

A free and unlimited trade; a great accession of wealth, and a proportionable rise in the value of land; the establishment, gradual improvement and perfection of manufactures and science; a vast influx of foreigners, encouraged by the mildness of a free, equal and tolerating government, to leave their native countries, and settle in these colonies; an astonishing increase of our people from the present stock. Where encouragement is given to industry, where liberty and property are well secured, where the poor may easily find subsistence, and the midling rank comfortably support their families by labour, there the inhabitants must increase rapidly; to some of these causes we owe the doubling of our numbers in somewhat more than twenty-five years. If such hath been the progress of population under the former restraints in our trade and manufactures, a population still more rapid may be reasonably expected when these restraints come to be taken off.

Should France and Spain, either from inability to contend with Great Britain, or governed by weak, irresolute, or

corrupted counsels, or influenced by the dangerous precedent of countenancing subjects in arms against their sovereign, refuse to enter into any treaty or alliance with these colonies, and prohibit their subjects from trading with them, could the colonies by their own strength and internal resources maintain the war for five or six years?

It is not at all probable that this war can last so long. If the first efforts of the British government should prove unsuccessful, the decay of trade, and the consequent distress and ruin brought on the manufacturers and merchants of Great Britain will occasion great divisions in the nation, perhaps a revolution; such factions and tumults would certainly prevent a full exertion of the British nation's strength. Should the war be protracted for three years, even after that space of time its operations will become languid and feeble; a smaller force may then be opposed to the enemy, and as we diminish our land army, we may augment our navy. In the winter we may force, at least, a clandestine trade with foreigners in spite of the British marine. During the war, manufactories may be set on foot, and promoted by the respective legislatures of the several colonies. We shall be able, in eighteen or twenty months, to make within ourselves gunpowder, cannon, fire-arms, and all the implements of war. The establishment of such manufactures will find employment for the poor, and be a prodigious saving to the country. A strict œconomy may lessen our expences in other particulars. The pay of the army may, perhaps, hereafter be reduced, and a well disciplined militia, under proper regulations, might put us in a condition to disband a considerable part of our regular forces. Should the colonists conduct the war with prudence and success, loans of money, may, perhaps be negotiated among foreigners, and even in England, on easy terms; a contraband trade will enrich some of our merchants, and bring in gold and silver. The procurement of these precious metals is an object of the utmost consequence, a certain proportion will be requisite to give credit to our paper currency. Our country abounds with all the necessaries of life; we have iron, copper, and lead mines, and we already make iron in quantities equal to our consumption, and the increasing demand. Men convinced of the justice of their cause, animated with the love of liberty, and fighting in defence of it, are capable of incredible efforts; conduct, valor, virtue, and perseverance combined are irresistible; necessity

fity may require the full exertion of all these, but the skilful politician would not wish to see the patriotism of his countrymen put to so severe a trial.

Suppose the war to continue six years, and that it will cost us three millions per annum. If victory at the end of that period should effect and secure our independance, eighteen millions will not perhaps on reflection be thought any such mighty incumbrance. An unconfined trade will open new sources of treasure; domestic will supply the place of foreign manufactures, and prevent a very great drain of our wealth; foreign luxuries may be subject to high duties; the burthen too, as it will be divided among a greater number, will fall the lighter on the rising generation; six millions of people will probably discharge the debt contracted by three; the vacant and ungranted land may be made a fund for paying off a part of this debt, by appropriating the purchase-money and the reserved quit-rents to that purpose. The pernicious consequences of a heavy national debt, so fatal to Great Britain, should teach the colonies wisdom, and induce them to get rid of the load as quickly as possible. It is not the interest of states more than of individuals to be indebted; but as individuals on some occasions may contract debts with a view to future gain, so states may prudently in particular emergencies anticipate their revenues by borrowing present capitals on the credit of future interests, that the abilities of several years may be cast into one. WE CANNOT PAY TOO GREAT A PRICE FOR LIBERTY, AND POSTERIITY WILL THINK INDEPENDANCE A CHEAP PURCHASE AT EIGHTEEN MILLIONS.

CASE IN POINT. *What caution is to be used lest public counsels and opportunities of managing affairs be lost, under pretence of a long treaty, spun out on purpose by COMMISSIONERS of the opposite party.*

AFTER the first commotions and tumults in the Netherlands, the Spaniards and Dutch treated divers times about

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bout reconciling their differences; for which end they called divers meetings, or assemblies, wherein the Spaniards constantly did this, that they protracted the time by long debates, and at length made no concessions; and so in the mean time would deprive the Dutch of proper opportunities to carry on the war, and establish their liberty. At length they met once more at Breda, where the deputies of both parties being present, those for Spain insisted on having all things acted and examined in order; that order consisted herein, when private and particular things, which were impediments to a general reconciliation, were first dispatched and removed out of the way; and then they would treat about establishing a general friendship and unity between the parties: which, when the Dutch deputies understood, who had been so often amused, they debated among themselves, whether it was convenient they should proceed in that manner in this conference?

OPINIONS. Some were for agreeing with the advice and method of the Spaniards herein; for the rules of order did require that they should first treat of things past, then to come, especially since the former might prove an impediment to the other; neither could they fully treat of a reconciliation, without those impediments were first removed and taken away; and therefore they ought first to treat of this.

Others opposed this, saying, it signified nothing to observe this method, without they arrived, by the observance thereof, at a just and the designed end; which if they did suppose was not to be attained to, to what purpose should they have so many deliberations and altercations about other matters? and what would the consequence be else, but the present losing of the present opportunities, which otherwise might have been better improved?

Liberty of conscience, in matters of religion, was the end they aimed at, and it signified nothing to talk of other matters, or to have all the rest granted to them, without this; and therefore they were in the first place to ask the Spanish deputies, whether they had power to reconcile all differences with the safety of their religion, and liberty of conscience? If so, all things might be treated of in order. Neither could they then doubt but all things must terminate well; but if otherwise, it signified nothing to transact all other matters in order, for opportunities in the mean time would be lost, and nothing at last
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done by that congress, which they had had sufficient experience of already.

RESOLUTION. This last opinion they agreed to, as the best and most adviseable to follow: and therefore they asked in the first place, before they would enter upon any other matters, whether the Spanish deputies had power to allow of liberty of conscience?

EVENT. Hereupon they came presently to know, that they were not empowered to do that; and therefore the Dutch deputies departed forthwith, that so they might not be impeded by the protracting of time, but make use of other occasions that presented themselves against the Spaniards, and assert the liberty of their religion.

JUDGMENT. By how much the seldomer good opportunities offer themselves, so much the more they are to be minded; but enemies and adversaries for the most part endeavour to spoil them, under a pretence of offering peace, and spinning out their debates to a great length. What is to be done in this case? Certainly a Christian scarce ought to refuse meetings offered him to treat of a peace. And while a peace is treated of, either all acts of hostility are to cease till the peace is made; or if they have otherwise agreed on't, they are, in order to prevent the losing of time and opportunities, by dilatory debates and consultations, to demand to be informed by the deputies of the adverse party, whether they have power to grant those things which we think to be wholly our due, and which we neither will nor can be without; and lastly, without which the granting of all the rest will signify nothing: but if they have no such power, why should not they at the very beginning of their meeting leave them, as persons insignificant to their purpose, and rather noxious to them than otherwise. In this case it is the highest prudence, and much time and divers opportunities may be gained, by sitting out at first what is like to become of the main thing for which the assembly was appointed. And herein the Dutch acted very cautiously and advisedly.

Proposals for a CONFEDERATION of the United Colonies.

ARTICLES of agreement and confederation, entered into by the several colonies of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts-Bay, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Three Lower Counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North-Carolina, South-Carolina, and Georgia.

A R T I C L E I.

THE said colonies do severally enter into a firm league and covenant with each other to act in union, by the name of *The United Colonies in North-America*, for their common defence against their enemies, the security of their LIBERTIES and PROPERTIES, and for their mutual and general welfare.

II. Each colony shall retain and enjoy as much as it may think fit of its own present laws, customs, privileges, and peculiar constitutions, and have the sole direction and government of its own natural police; but shall form no alliances or political connections with the people of any other country or state, separate from the other United colonies.

III. For the management of their common interests and concerns, a general Congress of Delegates, from the several United Colonies, shall be held on the first Thursday of September, annually, at such place as the Congress shall appoint; the next September session to be at such place as the present Congress shall appoint: and each succeeding annual session shall be in a different colony, until it hath been held in seven of the middle colonies at least, and so in perpetual rotation, unless exigencies require a deviation, or the Congress shall think fit to enlarge the circuit, or extend it to all the colonies. The number of Delegates from each colony shall be in proportion to the number of its inhabitants, of every age and quality, not exceeding one Delegate for every thirty thousand inhabitants complete, who shall be annually elected by the Legislative Assembly, or Convention of the respective colonies. And to constitute a Congress, two thirds at least of the United Colonies shall be represented therein. And a concurrence of a majority of the Colonies represented, and also a majority of the Delegates present, shall be necessary to make a vote of the Congress. The Delegates, when

when convened in Congress, shall elect one of their number to preside, and a suitable person for secretary, to keep a record of their votes and proceedings.

IV. The Congress shall have authority to agree on proper measures for the defence and security of the United Colonies against all their enemies ; for restoring peace and harmony with Great-Britain, on terms not inconsistent with the constitutional rights of any of the colonies ; to manage treaties, and form alliances of amity and commerce with other states ; determine on peace and war, superintend Indian affairs, establish and regulate post-offices, hear and determine controversies between colony and colony, according to the right of the parties, by the rules of law or equity ; make rules for regulating the naval and land forces in the pay of the United Colonies, appoint the general-officers to command them, and other officers necessary for the managing public affairs under the direction of the Congress, appoint a committee of Safety and Correspondence to transmit such matters to the recesses of the Congress as may be judged necessary to commit to them for the general welfare of the United Colonies. But the Congress shall have no authority to impose or levy taxes, or interfere with the internal policy of any of the Colonies.

V. The charges of war, and all other expences that shall be incurred for the common welfare, and allowed by the Congress, shall be defrayed out of the common treasury, which shall be supplied by the several colonies, in proportion to the number of their inhabitants of every age and quality, a true account of which shall be triennially taken and transmitted to the Congress. The taxes for paying that proportion shall be laid and levied by the authority and direction of the Assemblies of the respective Colonies ; and each Colony shall be at the expence of supporting its own Delegates in Congress.

VI. No army shall be kept up in the pay of the United Colonies in time of peace ; but each colony shall always keep up a well regulated and disciplined militia, sufficiently armed and accoutred ; and shall also be provided with public stores of ammunition, not less than at the rate of two pounds of powder, and eight pounds of lead or leaden ball, for every militia-man in the Colony. And when troops are raised in any of the Colonies for the common defence, the commission officers proper for the troops raised in each Colony (except the general-officers) shall be appointed by the Assembly and Convention

Convention thereof, and commissioned as the Congress shall direct.

VII. Any other of the British Colonies on this continent, upon their acceding to this confederation, shall be admitted to the privileges of the Union.

A Confederation of the Colonies would be useful, if the former connection between them and Great-Britain were restored, and would not be inconsistent therewith.

But in their present state, when they are expressly excluded from the King's protection by a late act of Parliament, and probably will never be restored to it again, unless they resign their liberties, and Great-Britain is carrying on a cruel war against them; is it not absolutely necessary, that they should enter into an explicit Confederation with each other, to enable them to exert their united strength in their own defence, when they may expect soon to be attacked by all the force that the British Government can send against them? The New-England Colonies, by many years experience, found great advantages by a Confederation, in carrying on their wars with the Indians, in treating with neighbouring Colonies settled under other states, and in adjusting and settling matters among themselves. A Confederation will require the consent or approbation of the several Colonies in their respective Assemblies or Conventions, and that they authorize their Delegates to ratify it in Congress before it will be valid.—Ought it not to be forwarded without loss of time?

The foregoing Articles are proposed to the Public rather to draw their attention to the subject, than as a perfect *model*. Should they be of any use in forming a Confederation, they will, doubtless, admit of amendments.

T H E E N D.